

Educating Adults
to
PROTECT & EMPOWER
Children



A Publication by
A Quarter Blue

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LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER OF A QUARTER BLUE



I am Martha Nix Wade, the founder of A Quarter Blue~Stopping Childhood Sexual Abuse. A Quarter Blue represents A QUARTER of children who will become BLUE from the effects of sexual abuse if society remains under-educated.

I founded the organization out of my own personal experience. I grew up as a child actress. My sexual abuse started around the age of seven while I was playing Janice Horton on *Days of Our Lives*. It continued through early puberty when I played Serena Burton on *The Waltons*. I had kept this secret to myself for many years. I did not understand the magnitude of the impact sexual victimization took on my life physically, emotionally, and spiritually. When the truth surfaced concerning my perpetrator, I began the healing process. I tapped into the buried emotions that I had never allowed to come forth, and I have found the beauty in me that my perpetrator attempted to snuff out.

I have dedicated my adult life to stopping childhood sexual abuse and other crimes through telling my story, and what I learned under the control of my

perpetrator. I have chosen to live as a victor, so that I can make a difference with my experiential knowledge.

In developing and finalizing this resource for trusted adults, I have surrounded myself with fellow victors over sexual abuse and professionals. These professionals include physicians, law enforcement personnel, educators, lawyers, parents, and psychologists. We hope that this resource will be enlightening and empowering. May it inspire you to implement these principles with the children in your life.

Put these principles into action in your homes, schools, churches, troops, and anywhere you have contact with children and other trusted adults. You have the power to be a part of the solution as a change agent.

Hopefully, after you finish reading this guide, you will feel compelled to educate and empower the children in your life. You *will* be making a marked difference in protecting them. You will also be giving them the freedom to be honest if someone ever attempts to expose them to inappropriate behavior.

I wish my parents had this handbook to guide them in these principles. They are grieved by the fact that they were blinded through their lack of education.



FOUR LEADING PRINCIPLES IN PRESERVING THE INNOCENCE OF CHILDREN

DEMONSTRATE

The greatest tool in protecting our children from sexual abuse is demonstrating appropriate and authentic love. Actions truly do speak louder than words. If children experience love and acceptance, they are less likely to fall prey to the conditional love a pedophile offers.

EDUCATE

According to The Child Molestation Prevention Research Institute, 95% of sexual abuse is preventable through education. We must understand the realities of this epidemic. ³ We must invest time in understanding pedophiles and their tactics. We cannot fear the truth and hide it from our children.

Education empowers children.

COMMUNICATE

We must find a balance in communication. We must speak openly about the truths concerning the world we live in. Take time to listen to the thoughts and opinions of children. Quite often children are expected to listen, but never heard or understood. Pedophiles are experts at bridging this gap in communication, to ultimately gain complete trust from their potential young victims.

PARTICIPATE

We must be actively involved in our children's lives and the lives of the people with whom they spend time. If we are participating in their lives, it will leave children less vulnerable to predators. The level of accountability automatically increases.

DEMONSTRATE

Children's views and attitudes are formed more out of what we do, rather than what we tell them to do. Demonstration shows integrity. Integrity will illuminate a safe path for children. This will enable and equip them to discern right from wrong.

Adults empower children by:

Demonstrate Authentic and Unconditional Love

Demonstrate Slowness to Anger

Demonstrate Quickness to Forgive

Demonstrate Patience

Demonstrate Balance between Praise and Criticism

Demonstrate Truth is Valuable

Demonstrate Love that Is Understood

Demonstrate Selfless Living

Demonstrate Respect of Boundaries

Demonstrate Love Is Free and Forever

Demonstrate Appropriate Affection

Demonstrate Protection

Demonstrate Mutual Love

Demonstrate Authentic and Unconditional Love

As we love our children unconditionally, they are less likely to fall prey to the contrived and conditional love of a pedophile.

Be very cautious to not tell children that you love them because of something they do. Love them in spite of their failures. Their level of performance in school, home responsibilities, and relationships should **not** determine your love for them. Unconditional love springs from your heart, **not** from expectations or performance. Ultimately a perpetrator will equate love with performance. Children need to recognize the fact that performance is **not** love.

Perpetrators will link obedience to love. They may show disappointment by stating, “I love you, but you let me down when you did not show me love by...” We want to eliminate the add-on “but” to “I love you.” This shows condition. We need to show children that “WE LOVE THEM.(PERIOD)” Children must be affirmed that “I love you” is not a phrase to soften the blow of our disappointment with them. “I LOVE YOU” is forever and unconditional.

A pure, unconditional love has a handful of characteristics that demonstrate how someone should love children at the same time giving them the tools to recognize the ploys of a sexual predator.

Demonstrate Slowness to Anger

Anger confuses true love. While there is justifiable anger, we must be cautious in how we express our frustrations. When we yell in anger, we not only run the risk of crushing children, but we lose the ability to be heard. Children become desensitized. Continuous yelling creates an environment of chaos. When children are desensitized due to ongoing anger, they become comfortable in chaos. This creates opportunity for pedophiles. Pedophiles become the escape from the turmoil. Pedophiles align themselves as the savior from the mayhem. As trusted adults, we need to create a place where children feel free to let down their guard. We must create the place of retreat where a child does not fear being reprimanded for being themselves and being truthful. If you strive to become one who is not quick to anger, children will see you as the safe, caring adult, and they will be less likely to hide their failures from you.

Demonstrate Quickness to Forgive

While there are appropriate times to be angry, anger and disappointment should not linger. How often do we bring up past faults in the heat of an argument when the children in our lives fall short of our expectations? Adults tend to dangle children's faults over their heads, instead of releasing them from their failures. We need to forget and toss the memories of their failures beyond recollection. Do you hold grudges against children? Do you, yourself, ask for forgiveness when you fail your children? Nobody is perfect. Adults and children need to address their shortcomings, but you, as the adult need to lead by example first. Make room for failure and grace.

If children feel as if they are constantly reminded of where they fall short, they will look for time with others who are more compassionate, forgiving, and patient. Children will quickly attach themselves to people who seem to forgive and forget. Since pedophiles have a motivation to keep children submissive, pedophiles tend to control their victims through a quickness to forgive and forget children's failures. Pedophiles give children the permission to fail. Trusted adults must transform their ability to accept failures as a learning experience from which children can be released to have a fresh start.

Demonstrate Patience

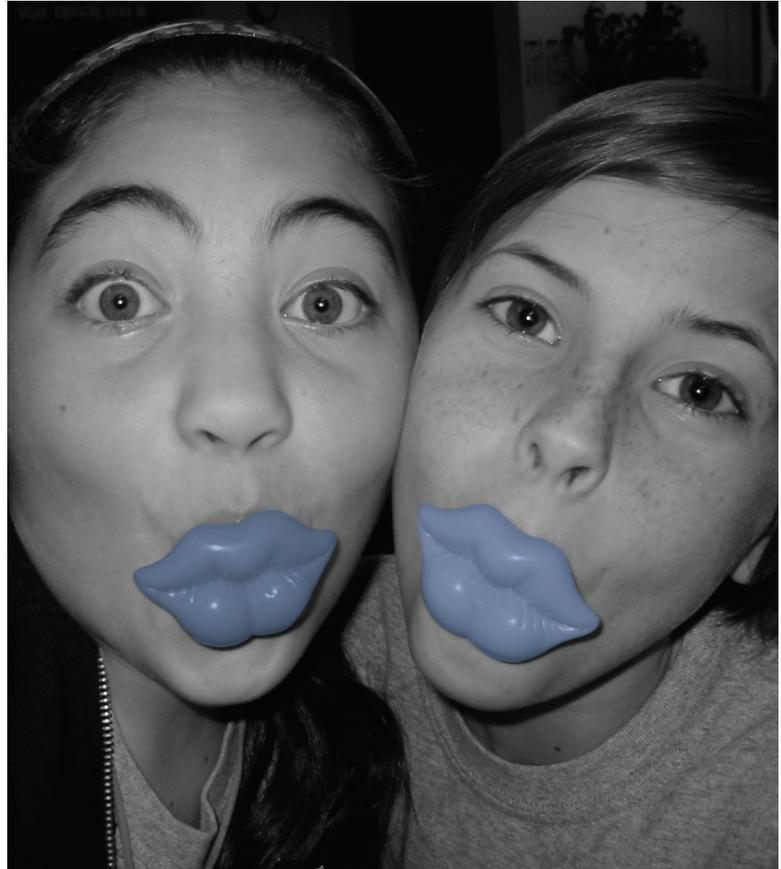
If we show a lack of patience with our children, they will be attracted to the seemingly unconditional patience of perpetrators. We need to be patient with the children in our lives. Children need time to process. They are experiencing life without familiarity of how to respond to each challenge. They need confidence that they will be forgiven as they experience failures and confusion. In our quick-paced society, we are not used to waiting, but children are still conventional in their approach to tasks. We need to embrace the time it takes to parent and love.

Demonstrate Balance between Praise and Criticism

Love does not breathe with a cynical, critical tongue. These characteristics tear apart children's self-worth and make them feel unloved and unloveable. Love grows out of encouragement and praise. Children are attracted to one who does not always accuse them of wrong.

Sarah Chana Radcliffe, a member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario, states, "The more positive attention the child receives, the more cooperative he becomes... IT'S ALL IN THE RATIO... It's actually impossible to parent without using some negative techniques. The techniques aren't meant to be negative -- they just feel negative to the child... The ideal positive-to-negative ratio is 80 to 20. That is, for every four positive actions a parent makes towards his child, he can afford to make one negative one... No matter how many things your child does wrong, you cannot afford to change the positive-to-negative ratio." 1

We believe that we balance our parenting or



care-giving by balancing criticisms with praises, 50/50. However, this creates unhealthy disequilibrium in children. Criticisms weigh heavier on children. Adults must create balance. This means for each correction, command, or criticism, an adult must elevate the child with AT LEAST four authentic encouragements or praises. And the incidental shortcomings that we point out must be tossed far beyond our recollection. If children are hungry for acceptance and praise, they may seek it from unsafe people in potentially unsafe ways.

Demonstrate Truth is Valuable

Many times children are afraid of the repercussions of telling the truth. Adults squash children expressing their opinions, ideas, and personalities when adults show disinterest, lack of attention, and anger. Children become conditioned to conceal the truth. Pedophiles test children to see if children have ability to keep secrets and lies. If children are used to hiding the truth, they will become targets for perpetrators.

Another way to help demonstrate that truth is valuable is to live a truthful life. We need to strive to tell the truth. We need to discover how to be authentic and compassionate simultaneously. Children may ask what we think or feel; we need to be lovingly honest.

Do we practice honesty in our daily tasks? If we receive too much change in a purchase, do we give back what is not truly ours? Our children are watching. If they see you manipulating the truth for your personal advantage, they will master the same. Predators are masters of manipulation.

Authentic love shudders at the sound of dishonesty. While honesty sometimes stings, honesty is still the best. Secrets are a pedophiles safe place. If children understand the value of truth, they will know it is wrong when someone asks them to conceal the truth.

Demonstrate Love that Is Understood

Gary Chapman, Ph.D. and Ross Campbell, M.D.'s *Five Languages of Love* identifies five languages of love adults should understand in order to raise children to recognize their uniquenesses. If we “speak” our child’s love language, they are more apt to interpret our words and actions as love. Exhibiting random acts of kindness within the five languages of love will allow children to feel understood and loved. The five languages of love are:

Words of Affirmation

Some children feel most loved when they hear words of affirmation. They are encouraged by praise and defeated by criticism. The average pedophile studies a child, and knows what they long to hear. If they are filled with unconditional praise, they are less likely to need the empty praise of perpetrators.

Quality Time

Other children long to spend quality time with loved ones. Have you taken the time to show your child that they are first on your schedule? When your children are struggling, do you take the time to listen or keep your eye on your watch?



Receiving Gifts

Other children understand love the clearest when they are receiving gifts. Birthdays and holidays are very important times they await to feel loved.

ACTS OF SERVICE

Some children find acts of service the greatest expression of love. The acts of service might be your daughter coming home to a clean room. They might love making packets for the homeless and giving them out.

PHYSICAL TOUCH

Certain children gain immeasurable fulfillment through physical touch. In order to guard them from seeking inappropriate physical touch, they must understand appropriate physical touch, they must understand appropriate parameters and experience sufficient appropriate hugs and time to cuddle.

While it is important to learn the primary way a child interprets love, it is imperative to exhibit love in all of these “languages.” This helps protect a child from seeking love from a pedophile. When children are filled with pure love, they will not hunger and thirst for focused time, gifts, affection, and encouragement from pedophiles. Pedophiles have an expectation of sexual gratification in return for acts of kindness.

I encourage you to regularly ask your children, “Do you know you are loved? What could I do differently so that you will feel more loved?” Then share with your children what they do that makes you feel loved by them. Knowing you are loved and feeling you are loved are very different.

Demonstrate Selfless Living

Understand what children enjoy doing when you spend time together. Many times we choose what we do with selfish motivations. We need to understand what they enjoy doing and participate in those activities, setting our personal preferences aside and creating a bridge to the child’s world.

Before I spoke at a retreat, women broke into small groups to discuss their current concerns. A mother chatted about the distance she felt between her daughter and her. I asked her what activities her daughter enjoyed. She said with disgust, “She always asks to go get a manicure and pedicure. But that is so disgusting! You could get a fungus!” I responded, “Take the risk! Go get a manicure and pedicure! Your daughter is worth it!”



Pedophiles appear to live selflessly therefore, we must evaluate if we are living selflessly. If we show children that their opinions and desires are valued through selfless living, they are less likely to fall into the trap of pedophiles. Love your children with a love that gives them self-worth and contentment.

Demonstrate Respect for Boundaries

Boundaries are personal limits that each person develops through life experiences. They typically are defined through people's dislikes and discomforts. Everyone's boundaries are different. Training children to develop boundaries gives them a sense of personal worth and identity. When children understand that their physical and mental boundaries are valued, they develop a personal identity that is more likely to stand up against a pedophile's schemes.

Teach children how to build boundaries around their dislikes. They will test you to see if you truly respect their boundaries. It may be through playful interactions such as tickling. When you tickle most children they beg through their laughter for you to stop. Do you respect their boundaries and stop? If children do in fact like tickling they will ask you to do it again. You may even playfully ask permission.

Another common dislike for children is kissing certain people. Adults should not be forcing children to kiss "Scary Aunt Mary." If a child expresses their discomfort with kissing a person, talk about it. "Do you know why you don't like kissing her? I am so thankful you told me how you feel. If you don't want to kiss Aunt Mary, you don't have to. Are you comfortable with giving her a hug? A high five?" Be an advocate for the child. Explain to people what the child's comfort level is. This will allow the child to see how to express personal boundaries.

Another common occurrence is checking children's private area for hygiene or medical purposes. This is a great opportunity to demonstrate how to give them power over their bodies. As parents, ask permission to check your children's private areas.

If trusted adults respect children's boundaries, even in play, they will realize that during seemingly playful interactions

with a pedophile they have the right to say, “Stop.” They also may feel a sense of empowerment that their boundaries truly are respected.

Demonstrate Love Is Free and Forever

Adults must resonate that no matter what children do, we will love them forever. They may do things we do not love, but that must not affect our love for them. Explain to children that no one should ever expect something in return for love. Love is something that is free of charge and is never lost. Since bribes are a common practice of pedophiles, do not condition them to believe that love can be bought. Explain that true friendships respect the desires and the boundaries of others, free of obligation. True love is not conditional or temporal. Unconditional love is free and forever.

Demonstrate Appropriate Affection

If children do not experience appropriate affection, they may fall victim to the distorted affection of a pedophile. This is one of the primary reasons I believe my pedophile sought out a relationship with me. He saw that my dad did not affirm me through physical affection. My dad duplicated the love that was shown to him during his childhood. His family did not express love through physical touch. Also in college, my dad attended a Christian university. The extreme conservative teachings led him to believe that public displays of affection were inappropriate. The intent was to promote purity before marriage, but it trickled downward from dating, to marriage, and ultimately to parenting. For my dad, displaying innocent affection toward my mom, my sister, and myself could cause confusion. As best as I remember, my dad rarely hugged, held, or kissed me after my toddler years. However, that did not take away my deep desire to have physical affirmation and affection. Children long to have people show kindness by demonstrating appropriate affection.

My desire for love through physical closeness made me Art’s target. Art moved in and filled that void, and ultimately violated it.



Children long to *feel* loved. Most children yearn for physical contact. If it is not filled appropriately, they may be drawn to the first sign of physical affection a pedophile is willing to give them. We should not leave our children starving for that type of love.

Demonstrate Protection

Demonstrate your love by protecting children in your life. In the early years, we need to defend children and model how someone guards people they love. As children move up through elementary school, encourage them in their process of defending themselves. Allow them to know we will stand in the gap if they need our help, but we want to allow them to grow in defending their beliefs and convictions. They need to know they are a gift worth protecting, and their thoughts and opinions are valuable and worth fighting for.

Demonstrate Mutual Love

As a child, do you recall folding a piece of paper in half, then slipping your fingers into the round-edged scissors, and cutting out a perfect heart? You almost burst from the excitement you felt to succeed at such a seemingly tough task. And then as you grew older, such innocent experiences and carefree emotions began to wane. Did your geometry teacher exude the same glimmer when you learned about the line of

symmetry that divides a symmetrical object into two equal parts? I doubt it!

So it seems to be with our experience with love. With our children, at birth we admire their every little inch. When they grow older our schedules fill with activities. We fail to leave “white space” to express admiration and encouragement. We forget to focus on the wondrous gift entrusted to us. Sometimes parenting may even feel more like a chore than an honor.

But let’s go back to the basics. First, we need to love, admire, and encourage ourselves so that we are pouring out from a full heart of self-love. As you love yourself, you will be better equipped to love others. Love is two-sided, like the two sides of a perfect heart. That line of symmetry is the line that creates equal parts, mirror images, a reflection. Seek to mirror an image of love to others, a love that is patient and kind. A love that is not self-seeking. The line of symmetry can become a line that divides us from the ones we love, if we are angry, resentful, and self-seeking. Or it has the power to be a bridge of truth and hope that never fails.

When we give an outpouring of love, it is received if it is understood. Does your child feel loved? Have you ever asked them what you can do for them to feel more loved? A child does not enjoy the abuse that occurs behind closed doors, and if you let them know their opinions matter, they won’t be imprisoned by creepy secrets.

Do you know your children well enough to seek and fulfill their loves and personal interests? Show the children in your lives that their desires matter. Take your daughters to get their nails done, if that makes them feel adored. Throw the football with your sons, if that’s what fills them with joy. Set aside some time from your first desires to hear and fill the desires of those whom are entrusted to you. A pedophile studies a child to truly know their heart-felt struggles and desires. You must be a better student of your children and help to not leave them feeling unadorned and under appreciated. If they understand a perfectly symmetrical love, they are less likely to fall prey to the conditional and counterfeit love a pedophile will offer.

Why not grab a piece of paper for yourself and your children? Teach them how to cut out a perfect heart together



and talk about love. Talk about the kind of love that will better equip you to love freely and forever. Express a love that will empower your children. Develop an experiential love, a mathematical love that mirrors a pure, unconditional, encouraging, and understanding love.

EDUCATE

Many adults feel fear toward educating children about sexual topics, including sexual abuse. As we become aware about the epidemic nature of sexual abuse, we must learn tools for prevention. We can shore up our defenses, and know what weaknesses in our family set us up to be target by perpetrators. We can prepare our children for unforeseen advances by their playmates, teenage friends, family members, or “trusted” adults. Through education concerning sexual abuse prevention we equip children to be better prepared. Many adults believe this knowledge will soil children’s innocence. Actually, appropriate education preserves children’s innocence.

At the age of nine, my daughter read a poem about the origin and symbols of the candy cane. She needed to write a summary in her own words. She fumbled about how to describe the white symbolizing Jesus’ virgin birth, “Mommy what’s a virgin?”

“Do you really want to know?”

“Yes.”

“Well, you know how you and your brother look different?”

And the “sex talk” went on from there. Afterward, she beamed with pride and power with this new knowledge, “May I watch Daddy and you do sex?”

Even though we give children new knowledge, they typically will have a fresh purity and innocence surrounding these facts. Children exhibit a refreshing purity, unless they have had their innocence stolen from a selfish sexual predator.

Also, be conscious of your approach. When you speak matter-of-factly, children will tend to hear the information without fear or disgust. One mother, in a focus group scoffed, “ARGH! I had to have the icky talk with my sons!”



Children are able to read a person's fears and judgements. If children feel sexuality is an unsettling topic to you, they will hide questions and concerns from you and seek answers elsewhere.

So, utilize the following information to gradually introduce the subject of sexual abuse and guard your expressions.

We cannot allow the secrets of sexual assault against children to remain a mystery or forbidden discussion. We need to begin to peel away the layers to get to the core of the issues.

Pedophiles are at the core of the issue. While some pedophiles are violent predators, the average perpetrator is more subtle in his or her crimes.

Perpetrators Don't Have "A LOOK"

I received one of the most liberating words in a text, "Guilty."

For countless months and postponements, seven men did not know if they would hear such a conviction for their molester. They feared he would remain free on false presumptions or technicalities, but on February 16, 2010, a 36 year-old male was convicted of 23 counts of molestation.

Reading some of the blogs following the article in The Press Enterprise reveal societies' ignorance concerning sexual abuse. One such blog read:

"There is no way this is true ... He had nothing but good in his heart. He helped others when no one believed in them or did anything to help them. Angulo is not a bad person. I know from the bottom of MY heart that he is not

guilty if this accusation it makes me sad when innocent people go to prison!”

Society must understand that perpetrators rely on their image as a benefactor to blind people to their secret, insidious life. This convicted pedophile disguised himself as a godly, loving member who helped people in need. Like most pedophiles, he picked his victims carefully, choosing the compliant children who proved to be faithful in keeping the secret.-until now.

Another blog stated, “Look at his picture, how did the parents not know? What a creep.”

Of course the picture posted in the newspaper article was the pedophile’s mug shot. Most people accused of a crime look their worst in their photo. Also, a narcissist would have a smirk on his/her face, thinking they were above a conviction. We ignorantly believe that pedophiles have “a look.” This ignorance leads children into the ultimate masquerade. Pedophiles are masters of disguise, and can fool the most caring parent.

As I sat in the courtroom for his sentencing, I saw a handsome, clean-cut man shackled to an orange prisoner uniform for life. No one would have assumed this man with a captivating personality and enthralling good looks were a deceitful trap. This perpetrator banked on blinding families through his believable façade. He knew that average parents would not allow their children to be in the presence of a creep, so he created a masterful disguise.

To claim that a pedophile has a specific look is misleading. The average pedophile is male. One out of twenty young boys or men are pedophiles, compared to one out of 3,300 women. 2

Some believe that the number for women perpetrators is so low, because society views only women molesting girls is immoral. Unfortunately, when an older woman has sexual relations with a boy, the minor is viewed as a lucky. This does not address the long-term impact upon the boy. “Experts say sexually victimized boys experience later difficulty in developing age-appropriate relationships and gravitate toward pornography and one-night stands. They are also more likely as adults to suffer depression, anxiety, and drug addiction.” 3

According to the Medical Journal of Australia, only 8% of abusers are strangers. 41% being family members including

biological relatives and step-fathers or adoptive fathers. 4

Interestingly, the statistics from *The Abel and Harlow Child Molestation Prevention Study* show that the demographic breakdown of American men almost mirrors the breakdown of male pedophiles. 5

73% of American men are married; **77% of perpetrators are married.** This union with a woman helps with the façade. In some instances, the wife acts as an accomplice. My perpetrator's wife fit this mold. The logic behind a woman enabling such abuse can be varied. Some of these women were molested. Both may be narcissistic. Narcissism is a fixation and love of oneself. In the self-preoccupation, people with narcissism lack empathy for another's feelings or well-being. They also feel they are above being caught. Pedophiles carefully choose their spouses. Men choose women who feel dependent on the male and women who feel ill-equipped to care for themselves.

After a seminar, I had lunch with a woman who shared her story with me. "I was 32 and couldn't drive and had never worked. I had a gut feeling that something was happening with my daughter and my husband. But I had convinced myself I was being paranoid. And if my suspicions were authentic, where would I get my next meal? How would I find shelter? I was able to dismiss my feelings until I walked in on my husband violating my daughter. I rescued my daughter and grabbed my two sons. We ran. I didn't know where my next meal was going to come from, but I didn't care." Her pedophile-husband chose her well—he thought he had kept her in a state of dependency and helplessness.

The spouses of pedophiles have many stories. Some were chosen because of their innocent dependency. Others are equal participants as accomplices. A small population participate in the sexual acts.

46% of perpetrators have a high school education; and 49% of American men have their high school diplomas. **40% of perpetrators have college experience;** and 32% of American men have some higher education. Education helps perpetrators hold higher trust positions. High trust positions tend to give people access to children with less accountability. Background checks, such as, Lifescans give a false sense of trust. A person will only fail clearance, if they have been caught as a sexual offender. **65% of male perpetrators also are employed,** like 64% of American men.

By being employed they appear to be responsible citizens. As trusted adults, we believe that people who are actively involved in the work force are more trustworthy.

Abel and Harlow's research also shows that American men and pedophiles are equally as religious, **93% of pedophiles claim to be religious**. Where do people normally believe their children are safest... at their churches, temples, or other places of faith. Just because people attend a faith-based building does not make them authentic believers in the righteous convictions that the faith was built upon.

Abel and Harlow's study also evaluated the ethnic breakdown of 3,952 average American men to admitted child molesters. According to their study the majority of sex offenders against children are white males. **79% of admitted child molesters are Caucasian**.

Perpetrators May Be People You Trust

My parents felt they scrutinized everyone with whom I spent time. They were ignorant about church-going people being capable of living a dualistic life— for to live as a compassionate benefactor in the eye of the public and being a sex offender behind closed doors was beyond the scope of possibilities to them. The idea of a “Christian” being a master of manipulation was unfathomable to them. In fact, this is the norm. Pedophiles usually have strong religious ties.

Pedophiles also choose high trust positions of power to receive “blind” trust, so they gain access to children. Perpetrators are parents, teachers, pastors, priests, doctors, and other respectable occupations. Sexual offenders abuse their positions of authority hoping the parent will trust them without question or forethought.

Survivor Connections found that pedophiles seek employment and volunteer positions where they have easy, non-monitored access to children. Fathers and stepfathers are common offenders; however teachers, camp counselors, therapists, coaches, priests, and Sunday school teachers have the accessibility to trusting parents and children to initiate abuse. They also find professions and unpaid assistant work where the average individual trusts them because of their

title. Innocent people blindly believe that doctors, teachers, and therapists are trustworthy. They do not question the motivation of people in positions of authority. They do not understand that people in authority do not necessarily have integrity.

Churches are a common breeding ground for sexual predators. Church attenders are idealistic about all those around them following the principles taught from the preacher. "...Church volunteers commit 50 percent of all incidents of sexual abuse. Paid staff commit 30 percent, and other children commit 20 percent." 6

A State Corrections Officer revealed his thoughts on evil, "Does evil exist?"

"I work in a prison. I see Evil every day. My last prison was a lockdown supermax, where Evil was naked and violent, right out in front. Now I work in a sex offender yard, where Evil wears a polite face, and warm smile.... And people wonder why I carry a gun. Evil gets out on parole next Tuesday..." 7

Perpetrators May Be Children

Pedophilia is a sly syndrome that leaves no group untouched. Even young children who have been exposed to sexuality prematurely define themselves and relationships by their sexuality. If they falsely believe love is shown through sexual interaction, they may emulate "love" with other children. They may also hope to be able to control another child in a world that seems to control them. Children duplicating sexual acts with another child is commonly called "acting out." Children have no means of sorting out these confusing thoughts. Their bodies sometimes hurt from the actions perpetrated upon them by an adult; others times they feel uncontrollable titillation. They are searching for wholeness through any means possible. So, they often become abusers themselves, planting the seed of sexuality in other children in an inappropriate way and at an unacceptable time.

Childhood victims of sexual abuse are crafted to be experts in lies and deception so that they create opportunities to be alone with children. They may be children, who always raise their hands to escort a friend to the bathroom and 23

peer through the space in between the bathroom doors. They may long for assemblies where the lights are dimmed and they can get away with sexual interactions. They may be elated to “play husband and wife” when the baby-sitter goes into another room. Quite often baby-sitters and parents find “playing husband and wife” endearing and innocent. Think through that statement: “Playing husband and wife.” What do innocent children see husbands and wives do? To innocent children, “playing husband and wife” is not acting out sexually. Age-appropriate thoughts of activities between parents are talking, holding hands, washing dishes, gardening, and more non-sexual interactions. Healthy couples do not demonstrate having sex for their children, therefore children do not imitate sexual activities with other children unless they have been exposed to sexual intimacy through pornographic images, sexual abuse, or other intimate exposure.

Perpetrators May Be Created through Porn

The pornography industry seeks to lure children to their websites. They hope that children will stumble upon their websites with required searches for school. Also, the convenience of pornography through the boom of the Internet and cable television has increased pornography use and lowered the age of accessibility. Pornographic images and videos are readily available with one click of the mouse or remote. If children stumble upon porn, it is virtually impossible to stop the pop-up images. Children are exposed to a sexual world without proper understanding of what they are taking in. They feel invigorated and curious by their discovery, but this experience may lead them to a point of greater curiosity, and ultimately, an obsession with the pornographic world.

This trend has a direct affect on the rise of sexual abuse. Early access to pornography alters one’s perception of reality, and the newer porn has a distorted view of healthy sexual relationships.

1. Pornography has developed into a fantasy world where women are perceived to be highly sexual. Female porn characters long for sexual satisfaction continuously. These women negate a woman’s intrinsic need of affirmation

and affection. They are submissive sexual beings whose desires are equated to that of a male—this is not an accurate portrayal of the average woman.

2. In porn, an emotional connection and commitment are absent and exchanged for humiliation, control, submission, and punishment of women.

3. With the boom of sexual pop-up messages and the prevalence of sexual hyperlinks, children and teens have become desensitized to mere nudity and conventional sex; therefore the product that the consumer is being tempted by is more graphic and even violent.

4. With the accessibility of pornography, sex has become commonplace, and children are being taught to believe sex is not a big deal; it is just “hooking-up.”

More male minors are being convicted of sexual assault. Youth, who are exposed to pornography, desires to recreate the material shown in the pornographic footage. He may look to a more submissive child who looks up to him when a person his own age declines his advances, or when fear keeps him from even trying.

On July 24, 2009, four boys—ages 9, 10, 13, and 14 were arrested after luring an eight-year-old girl into a vacant shed with gum, and then gang raping her. As these boys’ stories unfold will we hear of their early introduction to manipulation, control, and sex through molestation and/or pornography? Their actions seem to tell a story of premature sexual exposure.

These boys’ crime was a violent form of “acting out.” “Acting out” may take on many forms, and we cannot turn a blind eye to this practice with children. There is a root to this type of behavior. Children are exposed to a sexual world

without proper understanding of what they are taking in.

If you were to ask these boys why they did not stop when the victim pleaded, they may have found justification from porn films' scripts. When female porn stars are in the midst of a gang rape scenario, they may be yelling, "Stop," but this is portrayed as her egging them on.

Pornography is not a harmless medium to teach our children about sex and human sexuality. If you choose to keep quiet about sexual issues, then classmates, pedophiles, or the porn industry will become your child's instructors.

Perpetrators Believe They Are as Gentle as Lambs

Usually pedophiles genuinely love kids, and it shows. Pedophiles consider themselves lovers of children. The North American Man/boy Love Association (NAMBLA) website states:

"We believe sexual feelings are a positive life force. We support the rights of youth as well as adults to choose the partners with whom they wish to share and enjoy their bodies... Present laws, which focus only on the age of the participants, ignore the quality of their relationships. We know that differences in age do not preclude mutual, loving interaction between persons. NAMBLA is strongly opposed to age-of-consent laws and all other restrictions which deny men and boys the full enjoyment of their bodies and control over their own lives."

Pedophiles believe these relationships are based a consensual love. They also state, "We condemn sexual abuse and all forms of coercion." 8



Pedophiles cannot perceive their acts as evil, since the average perpetrator first experienced love and acceptance from a pedophile as a victim of sexual abuse. They also fail to understand that children long to please people they care about. Children are more likely to cooperate with people who pay attention to them.

Sexual interaction for children will seem “consensual.” If children mistakenly believe sexual intimacy *is* love and a “positive life force,” they will choose to be “alive” with sexual intimacy.

Perpetrators Hope to Meet Undereducated Children

Pedophiles hope to meet and prey on the uneducated child, a child whom they can leave their imprint upon.

If we leave this topic area untouched, we have given a pedophile the opportunity to educate our children with their sexual views. “Parents are partly to blame if they don’t tell their children about [sexual matters]—I used it to my advantage by teaching the child myself,” proclaimed a convicted perpetrator. 9

Some children are educated through school programs that focus either on stranger-danger or good touch-bad touch. Both of these curricula leave a child quite vulnerable. They are only taught partial truths. Stranger-danger leaves them vulnerable to the majority of perpetrators who they know and trust. Good touch-bad touch categorizes touch in a way that is counter to our psychological responses. Endorphins cause our bodies to enjoy sexual touch. So, when a perpetrator begins by touching a child “lovingly,” it feels good. The child is conflicted. A child does not know where to go with these sensations, unless a trusted adult has walked him/her through insidious touching.

Perpetrators Have Excuses

Sexual abuse is a vicious cycle. If victims choose not to deal with the effects of the abuse, the trauma will permeate all areas of their victims’ lives. A survey of New Jersey prisons incarcerated for sexual crimes revealed that over 95% of the men were themselves abused. They believe that the remaining 5% probably just do not remember they were sexually

abused as children. 10

While a thread of sexual perversion is woven into a perpetrator's life at a very young age by another, our past traumas do not excuse our present actions. We must be responsible to deal with and understand our victimization so that we do not continue the cycle of abuse. There is no excuse! Pedophilia is a perversion that is seemingly incurable; since the average pedophile feels they are "ordinary" lovers of children. This craving is at the core of their being. They seek to please children in order to gain "consensual" sexual gratification.

For 24 years, Josef Fritzl incarcerated his daughter in the family basement. He fathered seven children with her, before she was found at the age of 42. In describing his relationship with his mother, Fritzl, created an inexcusable justification:

"She never showed me any love, she beat me and kicked me until I was on the floor and bleeding," he said. "I felt so weak and humiliated. I never got a kiss from her or even a hug although I tried very hard to please her. The only thing she did with me was go to church.

"She beat me and kicked me until I was lying on the floor bleeding. I had a horrible fear from her. She kept insulting me and told me I was a Satan, a criminal, a no-good." 11

While Josef Fritzl had a horrible life, there is no excuse for sexual misconduct. People created excuses for the famed film director, Roman Polanski's rape of a thirteen-year-old girl. His life has been fraught with hardship. He is pained by his memories as a holocaust survivor who lost his mother in Auschwitz. He is traumatized by the murder of his pregnant wife, Sharon Tate. How much more grief can he bear? While his life has been defined by horrific realities, this does not excuse him from raping a young girl.

Perpetrators Are Patient

Predators demonstrate patience as they invest much time in studying the felt needs of children and groom them

for a sexual relationship. They seek to fill those desires as a means of building trust and apparent credibility with the parents and child. Perpetrators are masters in understanding human character, tendencies, and weaknesses.

Perpetrators typically groom children over a period of time. It is quite subtle and slow process. This enables perpetrators to gauge how much unsupervised access they will have to children and how much the family members will trust them. Grooming a child develops a “trusting” relationship, through play and social interaction.

Grooming Techniques for Children

Having all the latest games or toys

Going to kid friendly restaurants or amusement parks

Tickling

Allowing children to steer a car while sitting on perpetrators’ laps

Giving rides in cars, motorcycles, campers, etc.

Being sympathetic/empathetic

Making secrets to see trustworthiness

Giving more sweets or treats than allowed by the appropriate caregiver

Giving of gifts

Playing hide and seek with kids and objects

Grooming Techniques for Teens

Providing alcohol or drugs

Organizing parties

Allowing to drive or other illegal activities

Giving of gifts the teen really wants

Texting, instant messaging, or talking on the phone for excessive amounts of time

Building a sympathetic, “trusting” relationship

Perpetrators Choose Their Victims Carefully

Some targeted children struggle fitting in socially. They are looking for some place to belong and be treasured. Pedophiles “identify” with the children’s feelings of inadequacy. These adults become the friend the children do not have. These perpetrators have the patience to wade through their lack of social skills.

Since these children do not fit into the social structure of their schools, abusers capitalize on this, seeking to fill the loneliness that festers deep within. Pedophiles may fill the pain with empathetic comments, “I know exactly how you feel.”

What set me up to be sought out, groomed by, and ultimately victimized by a sexual predator? I was trustworthy, submissive, innocent, obedient, and sweet-spirited, just like a perpetrator likes. These are admirable traits to have, however without education, empowerment, and discernment, children are left vulnerable.

The beauty of obedience, trustworthiness, innocence, and affection are precious jewels to be honored, not violated.

Pedophiles take a lot of time to test children and their families. Perpetrators study children with the intent to find which children are conditioned to endure unwanted tickling, kissing, and more. Since I was taught to obey my elders without questioning, I passed all Art's grooming tests.

Respecting children's boundaries solidifies their personal worth. If a child says, "Stop!" when you are tickling them, stop. If this is a game from their perception, they will invite you to continue to tickle them. We are constantly given the opportunity to validate their empowerment and voice.

The pedophiles, who are quite intriguing and alluring, edge their way into the lives of children and teens. They establish a "trusting" relationship. This type of pedophile has the latest toys and games that pull children into play in close proximity to them. They allow children to experience pleasures that their responsible caretaker would not permit. They start with seemingly innocent interactions to see if the child has any boundaries or difficulty keeping secrets. They start with seemingly harmless interactions, such as, tickling or butterfly kisses. They ease their way into overt sexual acts, once they have taught the child that this is love.

We need to evaluate the balance of an adult's life. Are they socializing with adults as effectively as children? Do they jump at the chance at being alone with your child to fill a need that you have? One key to safeguarding children is avoiding one adult to one child situations. Parents justify such situations. They might believe a toddler brother will protect the sister. They might assume that someone's credentials are enough. A fellow survivor of constant abuse by multiple perpetrators was even molested by an x-ray technician. Children in compromising situations, such as, physical exams, bath time, chat rooms should not be left alone. If it is impossible to create such safeguards in childcare, make plans to unexpectedly drop in on your baby-sitters to see if they are appropriate.

**Silence is our nemesis in this war against our children's innocence.
Pedophiles build on our fears and use this naiveté in our children to introduce sexuality.**

COMMUNICATE

Communication is one of the greatest tools in prevention. Effective communication includes five aspects that work hand in hand when speaking honestly with children about sexuality or sexual perversion. One convicted pedophile said, “Parents shouldn’t be embarrassed to talk about things like this—it’s harder to abuse or trick a child who knows what you’re up to.”¹

Speak truthfully about sexual issues, including abuse.

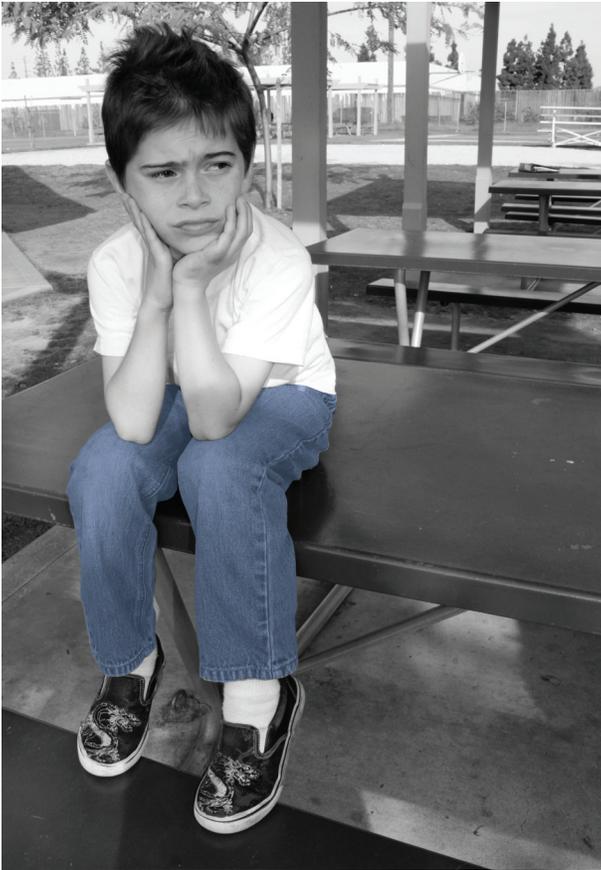
Speak matter-of-factly without showing disdain for the topic area.

Ask if they have any questions.

Listen! Listen! Listen!

Apologize when you fall short of the model you expect them to follow.

Approaching the subject of sexuality may seem awkward. Many parents exhibit trepidation as they speak about pedophiles, concerned that they are instilling unnecessary knowledge and undo fear in children. Knowledge is the primary way children are protected from the subtle ways of a perpetrator. The fear comes from the way in which the facts are shared. Children study the way something is said, and typically adopt their moral understanding of something by the way it is delivered. If the parent seems uncomfortable, disgusted, or timid about sex or sexual perversions, a child believes



sexuality and intimacy are to cause shame or embarrassment. This paralyzes children and keeps them from having healthy sexual relationships in the future. It also silences them if ever a pedophile or young perpetrator acts out with them sexually. They tend to be afraid of getting in trouble if they are honest about being involved in something so seemingly “dirty” and “shameful.” This type of attitude will keep children quiet about any questionable acts against them.

If there is openness in the discussion, children will be more likely to come back with questions or concerns in the future. Below are some suggestions to start empowering children with how to be protected from sexual abuse:

1. Explain to your child that there are no secrets to be kept from you. Secrets are pedophiles’ security. Secrets are dangerous. Help your child to understand that the end of movies and books, your surprise party, and your presents are surprises, not secrets. They will only be kept quiet for a period of time; and you will ultimately find out the surprise. Encourage children that telling the truth aids in keeping them safe and allows trusted adults to help them in times of trouble.

2. Teach children the actual names of their private parts. Talking honestly and openly about his penis or her vagina lessens the mystery and discomfort that may lead to silence if anything were to happen. It also helps professionals if ever there is need for investigation.

3. Encourage early independence with your three-year-olds. Begin to train them to wipe and bathe themselves, so as not to create confusion in protecting their private parts. Create a cheer to encourage them as they acquire independence over the course of their preschool years, “I can do it!” *I Am A Super Kid* (available at www.aquarterblue.org) helps encourage preschoolers to become independent and gingerly introduces simple, age-appropriate principles of protection. Train three-year-olds to defend their private parts. Empower them to care for their bodies. Many parents are afraid children will be dirty if they do not bathe and wipe them. Each child is different. Many children will be excited to gain independence as you walk them through how to care for their privates. “You are a big boy/girl now. I can’t believe how well you are doing at keeping clean.”

Explain to children that sometimes a doctor may need to check their private parts for health reasons. Ideally, physicians will explain what they are doing. This is a great opportunity to reinforce that a doctor may check the child’s privates only because another adult is in the room making sure the child is safe.

Even during x-rays and dentist appointments, explain to the medical professional that you need to be where you can see your child at all times. If questioned, assure the professional that this is for accountability and the child’s safety. During a surgery many medical professionals will be in the room, so help children understand that you will be by their side as soon as you are able.

4. Role-play a possible scenario. “We are going to pretend I am a friend who wants you to touch my private parts.” If they touch you in obedience, explain to them that they should not obey that type of request. Help children find their

voice. You may offer commands, such as, “In your biggest, courageous voice say, ‘STOP! Leave my penis alone!’” Ask them what they would like to say if ever someone tried to touch or photograph their private parts. This may be practiced with dolls and action figures, too.

5. Utilize play to help teach children the places on their bodies that no one is allowed to touch. Our S.O.S. (Shout Out Stop) Dolls show the private parts in red material. Have your child speak for the doll, “Stop. I don’t like that. You are making me uncomfortable. I don’t keep secrets! Stop it.” Each child’s natural response will be unique—allow them to find that voice.

6. Equip elementary children to better understand that their opinions matter, and they need to seek an adult’s help if they encounter sexual abuse personally or discover a friend’s “secret.”

7. Don’t force a child to kiss someone. If a child feels uncomfortable with a kiss, respect their boundaries... this demonstrates that you *do* treasure their opinions and truly endorse the principal of respecting their boundaries.

8. Help your children understand that they have no reason to distrust the people in their lives, but nobody has the right to touch them inappropriately or force them to keep secrets.

9. When a child stumbles upon sexual images talk about it after you have removed them from the stimulus.

A family took a vacation to Las Vegas to hit all of the venues geared toward families. As they walked on the strip, solicitors were passing out flyers for topless shows. The mom and dad took turns covering their seven-year-old’s eyes.

However, countless people tossed the unwanted flyers on the ground, and the young boy saw countless images through the opening under his parents' hand. He became intrigued. When he returned to school, a classmate told him how to see more images on the Internet, "Just type in 'naked ladies.'"

He found a window of opportunity to get on grandparents' computer unsupervised. "N-A-K-E-D--L-A-D-I-E-S" A rash of pop-ups began. The little boy began to panic. He could not make the pornographic images disappear fast enough. Overcome with fear and shame, he ran to his parents. While the mom wanted to rage, she took a deep breath, and allowed her husband to walk him through what he saw and how women are to be valued and respected. He knew in his heart that he had crossed a line, and the open communication with his parents allowed him to experience grace and understanding.

10. Repeatedly express how much you love them and want to protect them. Tell children that the best way for them to help you protect them is by being courageous with the truth, whatever it is. Reinforce that their opinions and thoughts always matter.

11. Reinforce the information through ongoing conversations, and follow up with appropriate books or pamphlets on the subject. A Quarter Blue has age-appropriate guides you may use to help.

Communication is the key to prevention.

Be the speaker of truth so that a pedophile doesn't get the opportunity to put

his or her imprint on the ones you love.



PARTICIPATE

Participate as You Monitor and Discuss Television, Movies, and Internet

Be an active watcher of television and Internet searches **WITH** your children. We have become a society of convenience and this creates opportunity for children to be overly exposed inappropriate images.

We put computers and televisions in bedrooms, which shuts most adults out of the ability to monitor and discuss content that children stumble upon. Children need adult supervision when being exposed to “outside forces.” With accessibility we have a responsibility to create accountability. Watching television and computer screens with children will take up additional time, but the investment will be invaluable. First of all, you are participating in their lives, and showing them that they are important to you and worth your time. You are showing them you care what is poured into their lives, and you want to know what they think about all they see and hear. Participating in children’s lives opens

up opportunities for communicating.

When commercials seek to convince children they need a product to belong or to be whole, combat it with truth of acceptance and love.

Also, when you come across an inappropriate image, quickly click it off, then discuss what they saw and understood about the unsuitable material.

Participate in Children's Activities

Children value your time. They gauge their understanding of love quite often by the time spent with them. While pedophiles abuse the time spent with children, some children still find it somewhat comforting that someone is paying attention to them. Since I grew up as a child actress, I did not have many friends my own age. I also rarely had playtime. With my perpetrator I had his complete attention and played games. His backyard was a heavenly retreat for a child. At his home I experienced a sense of freedom in play that somehow created balance with the sexual violations I endured.

Pedophiles also tend to lavish kids with gifts or treats that they enjoy. If parents are only about green beans and academics, children might fall into the trap of a pedophile who offers candy and stuffed animals. We must strike a balance. We need to create special days to celebrate their food preferences, too.

Recognizing Signs of Abuse

Recognizing “E”motional Signs:

Early sexual activity and/or overactive curiosity with sexual topics

Excessive knowledge about sexual subjects

Exaggerated emotions and/or personality

Engaging in self-mutilation

Extreme sensitivity to injury, spatial orientation

“E”mmEDIATE reluctance to spend time with an individual

Extreme look of vacancy in the eyes

Early Sexual Activity and/or Overactive Curiosity with Sexual Topics

With childhood sexual abuse and the introduction to sexual images/pornography, sexual “play” is at an alarming rate. Children have a natural curiosity with genitalia and sex, however there are behaviors that go beyond normal developmental exploration.

Toni Cavanagh Johnson, PH.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist, developed a chart distinguishing the natural and expected behaviors to those of concern to when you should seek professional help. One such example: It is natural for a children to ask about genitals, breasts, intercourse, and babies. It is of concern when children show fear or anxiety about sexual topics. It is imperative to seek professional help if children have endless questions about sex; and their sexual

knowledge is too great for their age. Her chart is available at www.tcavjohn.com. 1

Children who are sexually abused are very confused about what to do with these thoughts and sensations. With the frequency of sexual interaction increasing, children often become consumed with sex and sexual acts, and have no true understanding about appropriate friendships. They equate acceptance with sexual performance, so they act out with other children. They also want more of the tantalizing feeling experienced, trying to fill the aching void.

Children do not know how to evaluate the emotions in their heads, and many times the physical touch and attention feels good. And children are typically surprised by what is happening to them. An interior dialogue gets trapped in their heads wondering if this is really happening to them.

On the other hand there is a sense of frustration that they cannot control the molestation. So, they may “act out” with children who they can control and prey upon. This is a form of a “sex-treme.”

“Sex-tremes” are extreme sexual tendencies. “Sex-tremes” are not normal for children. While children have normal fascinations with genitalia, an obsession with their private parts needs to be discussed. Preschoolers quite often will explore their genitals and innocently touch others’ private parts. It is appropriate to talk to a child about curtailing touching, rubbing, and voyeurism without guiltting the child about their curiosities.

If the child tends to be sneaky or demanding in seeking sexual stimulation, it would be wise to seek counsel. Also, watch for imbalances, such as, when sexual touching outweighs other curiosities.

“Sex-treme” children identify primarily with their sexuality. They build relationships through their sexuality. They may move, speak, and act in a sexual manner to draw people into the perverted world to which they have been prematurely introduced.

Educators, parents, church/temple/synagogue volunteers and staff members should be mindful of such behaviors. Also, playground supervisors can be so much more than whistle blowers. They should be mindful to the interactions on the playground and in the bathrooms. Sex jokes will be heard as children grow older. There is a level of intrigue for most

children to get away with telling and hearing such “dirty” jokes. Adults need to refrain from telling such jokes, or having easy access to such material for children to explore. If such jokes become an obsession and sexual sounds or gestures become part of the child’s normal behavior, there is cause for question. Any question of sexual obsessions should be addressed.

At a local elementary school, a second grade girls constantly complained about a fellow female classmate looking through the crack of the individual bathroom stalls and under the doors when they were going to the bathroom. It was later discovered that when she would be a guest at girls’ homes she would ask them to “play husband and wife,” and then she would reach down their underwear to touch their privates.

Children tend to show their true character when they believe adults are not watching or listening. In the classroom, many children temper their behaviors. A lot of children’s feelings of worth and acceptance are performance based, so they do their best in the classroom. Children do what they need to in order to receive a desirable grade. On the playground, they typically let their impulses reign.

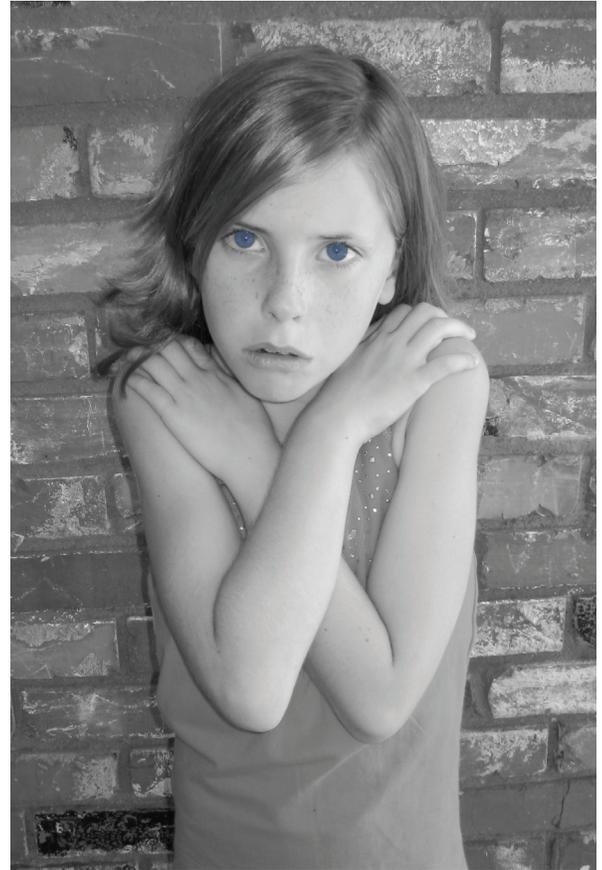
Classroom educators may have incredible tools to unveil children’s fixations through their written works and art, even notes between classmates.

In fifth grade, my teacher confiscated a booklet that a classmate and I had created. It illustrated many sexual acts we had tried to mimic and others we were going to experiment. I trembled with fear and shame as I watched the booklet be placed in the upper drawer of his desk. I wondered when he discovered our secret life, what horrific punishment would be coming my way. Minutes, hours, and days passed without repercussions. I will probably never know what he did with that booklet. If he read it, he could have been proactive in getting me help and potentially starting the process of convicting my perpetrator. It is also possible he did not feel equipped to help me. I understand that uncovering a child’s sexual obsessions would be overwhelming. For a child to receive appropriate intervention, please give professionals art or written materials that are causing you to be suspicious.

A sexually abused child typically enlarges the genitalia when drawing a person. They also may eliminate the genitals. This may reveal a hatred of one's own gender or genitals. In their artistic works they may also add or eliminate people to express obsessions or fears. Students' writings also may show underlying themes of abuse, lack of control, or sexual obsessions. Educators need to look beyond the grammar and hear children's cries through their written words.

The freedom children feel with being naked is typically innocent, as are erections for little boys. When a child seeks opportunities to be naked in public after being repeatedly told that is not appropriate, an adult should show some concern. If there is no change, the parent should seek professional counsel. A boy who frequently has an erection and/or complains about them being painful, needs medical attention. There are medical diagnosis and early sexual interactions that may cause these frequent erections.

Children like to role-play, but in playing marriage or doctor, they do not need to engage in sexual relations or nudity. They should be encouraged that intimacy is to be preserved for adulthood. When children actually begin a humping motion, there is need for concern to how they were introduced to this sexual motion. If they force other children to engage in such role-playing,



they need intervention.

Children should not be obsessed with sexuality. They should spend the majority of their time in curiosity about life and non-sexual play.

Exaggerated Emotions and/or Personalities

Children who are sexually abused may also have exaggerated emotions and/or personalities. They feel very little sense of control and hope someone will notice, either through tears or laughter. The class clown, the deeply depressed young person, and the overly happy and compliant child are all extremes of qualities in children. However, children who choose to define themselves by an extreme emotion *may* have experienced something deeply hurtful. We cannot assume this is a direct result of sexual abuse. Try to understand why children have lack of balance in their emotions and personality.

An extreme of a raging child is smearing bowel movements or purposely urinating outside of the toilet.

Engaging in Self-Mutilation

Sexually abused children may engage in self-mutilation. It is a form of self-mutilation where people slice into their skin. Self-mutilation used to be coined a girl's disease. This is no longer true. Boys and girls alike are crying out to feel and be noticed.

Cutters want to purify their pain and regrets. Sometimes cutters are so numb from the inflictions in their lives that they cut in order to feel. One who has been abused feels as if they have no control over life. They seek ways to have power over anything. They long to feel. An emotionally injured person has the disillusionment that taking a sharp object to the skin is the only way to actually feel.

Others cut in order that a teacher, a friend, or another trusted individual would notice and ask. Thirdly, cutters may

believe that this is an act of purification. They are plagued with dark thoughts; they want to purge. This a silent means of crying out, that must be noticed and addressed. Children and teens may constantly be wearing pants and long sleeves to conceal their cuts or scars.

There is also a sense of release and cleansing as the individual watches the blood stream from their bodies. One who has been severely injured feels callused. Feeling any hope, joy, or even anger feels beyond reach. Cutters need counseling in order to understand that they need to get the root of the pain and this will not happen through carving their flesh. Self-mutilation only re-injures the one who was unjustly hurt.

One abuse victim stated, “You’re freaking me out. It’s like you can see into my soul!” exclaimed a fifteen-year-old girl. As I shared with her my life story, she felt a sense of safety to disclose her history.

“I used to be normal. Now they say I am bipolar and schizophrenic.”

Her homemade beaded bracelet-cuffs covered her scarred wrists where she carves into her flesh to bring some sense of feeling back to her perceived numb life.

Extreme Sensitivity to Injury, Spatial Orientation

Molested children go far beyond what is reasonable or normal. It is not normal for children to jump out of their skin when they are brushed by another, or they begin to crawl within themselves if someone is in their “personal space.” If a child overreacts to injury, talk them through their extreme reaction. If any children in your life seem to have imbalances talk to them about their feelings so that they understand their responses are exaggerated, and that you are willing to hear their concerns. If at any point you suspect the child’s excessive responses are due to abuse, contact the authorities immediately. You are not trained to investigate physical or sexual crimes. Call your local police, call Childhelp® (800-422-4453), or visit ChildHelp’s website, www.childhelp.org, under “Local Phone Numbers” to reach your local child protection agency.

“E” mmediate Reluctance or Obsession to Spend Time with an Individual

Abused children may have a sudden change of attitude toward certain people. Typically there is an unspoken reason. In order to keep the secret quiet, children may manipulate situations to keep away from a pedophile. They might make seemingly flippant comments to paint a picture that the perpetrator is not interested in spending time with them or act ill when he/she visits.

Body language also is an indicator that may raise some concern. Sometimes children might be magnetized to pedophiles. Other children develop opportunities to be rescued from pedophiles.

One elementary-aged girl would cling to another student’s parent and ask with sparkly, begging eyes, “May I please come to your house and spend the night?” Before that parent could explain why she could not come over, she would leap to another parent, all the while looking back over her shoulder at her parent who was approaching. Her desperation was somewhat masked by her enlarged coal-colored eyes. There was something beyond the request when she asked with her piercing eyes framed by dark eyelashes. Who knows what occurred after she received rejection after rejection and had to go home.

Physical Signs:

These physical signs MAY BE related to sexual abuse, however, it is important to not automatically assume sexual abuse has occurred.

Wetting the bed

Struggling with bowels

Bruising or bleeding in private areas

Complaining about urinary tract or yeast infections

Reoccurring sore throat

Losing or gaining weight

Struggling with sexual orientation

(Some of the descriptions below are detailed, and may make the reader uncomfortable with the specific physical affects associated with sexual acts. If so, please move below the bolded headers to complete this chapter.)

Wetting the Bed

Bed-wetting has two categories: primary enuresis and secondary enuresis. Primary enuresis is a child who has never been dry for a period of six months. Secondary enuresis is a child who begins to bed-wet after an extended period of time of dryness. These children may have experienced some type of emotional trauma. It would be wise to contact your pediatrician.

Struggling with Bowels

Encopresis is the inability to control one's bowel movements. In an article entitled *Encopresis* by Stephen Borowitz, MD, says, "Approximately 80-95% of children with encopresis have a history of constipation or painful bowel movements... Little or no evidence indicates that encopresis is primarily a behavioral disorder, and most available evidence suggests that behavioral difficulties associated with encopresis may be the result of the encopresis and not the cause. Low self-esteem or parent-child conflict as a result of the disorder is not uncommon. Embarrassed youngsters also commonly deny having the problem." 2

There may be additional reasons for a child to struggle with bowel movements. Emotional distress from sexual abuse may lead to the inability to hold one's bowels. Children may be emotionally distraught as they hold onto the secret, and as a response they may also withhold bowel movements. Our emotional and physical beings are amazingly intertwined. If bowel control is an issue, a doctor should be consulted to find the cause.

A teenage girl who was sexually abused found herself gripped by the fear of having a bowel movement. The memory of sodomy caused her to never want to have anything come in or out of her anus again. She chose instead to throw up to clean out her system. Children who are abused may go to extremes through means they feel are less painful and traumatizing.

Bruising or Bleeding in Private Areas

Intercourse or touching may lead to visible bruising or bleeding in the private areas. While our impulse is to wash child following abuse, **DO NOT BATHE THE CHILD OR CLEAN YOUR CHILD'S CLOTHES.** Bag the child's clothes in a **PAPER BAG.** Seek medical attention and contact your local police department immediately. The accumulated evidence has the potential of making a marked difference when the perpetrator is persecuted.

Complaining about Urinary Tract or Yeast Infections

Although there are medical reasons for urinary tract or yeast infections, they may be a result of sexual contact. Delaying trips to the bathroom may increase the risk of urinary tract infections. If your child has pain while urinating, frequent urination, or pain/burning in the genitalia, or ongoing excessive vaginal discharge, contact your pediatrician.

Reoccurring Sore Throat

Most sore throats are connected with the common cold or strep throat. A symptom of oral copulation **MAY BE** a sore throat. The mere size differentiation between the male anatomy and a child's mouth may cause pain in the mouth or throat. If the violator has a sexually transmitted disease, the child may have oral sores, tonsillitis, or a sore throat. You must seek a physician's evaluation.

Losing or Gaining Weight

Victims of sexual abuse have an ongoing sense of a lack of control. Since they have no control when the abuse is taking place, they seek other areas in which to control. One coping mechanisms is controlling food intake and/or vomiting. They may be filling the void with food. They may be so consumed with self-image, that they may not eat or they may vomit in order to keep up appearances, and remain "beautiful" and "appealing." Often, sexually violated people



long to be accepted physically. They perceive their worth is wrapped in their external beauty. They also are seeking to control anything they are able. Their minds are in disarray, and they are constantly seeking means to take control.

While each of these signs may be an indication that someone has experienced abuse, we cannot necessarily allow one emotional or physical characteristic to determine abuse. Signs should bring you to a point of communicating with the child who is struggling with a few of these emotional signs. Communication is a tool that may unlock the reason behind the sign.

...And if you discover abuse has occurred

Breathe

Hearing from a child that his or her innocence was taken by a perpetrator is one of the hardest things you will ever hear.

Believe Them and Don't Leave Them

Individuals abused by perpetrators have already had their view of trust impaired. They are afraid that if someone knows what took place behind closed doors, nobody will like or love them, everyone will run away. Abandonment and loneliness are real issues for victims of sexual assault. As they step out with courage and honesty, you need to validate their actions and them as people. Be the antidote to the process— **49**

a person of encouragement and unconditional love.

Once a child shares about a sexual abuse incident, the process to protect them and bring justice to the perpetrator is long. Many law enforcement teams are striving to make the interview process not as hard on a child. It is in the best interests of children and the investigative process to have victimized children tell their story as few times as possible.

CAST, Child Abuse Services Team, was formed in Orange County, California. CAST began in 1989. Social service, law enforcement, deputy district attorneys, medical professionals, and therapists work together in the investigative process. Some teams have developed a room for children to be interviewed by one skilled professional, while other professional who need the information are watching through a one-way window. The room is tailored to be a warm, child-friendly environment. The interviewer is looking eye-to-eye with the child and sometimes playing with them in order to create a sense of safety. The victim receives immediate support. Also, the non-offending parent receives support through this difficult process.

Don't Hide from the Truth

Most people hide from the facts because they are too scared about what to do if they discover a child is being molested. They tremble at the thought of finding out there is a perpetrator in their midst. They feel silence or a cover-up is somehow better than truth and exposure to the realities of sexual abuse.

We cannot take this stance. We must be advocates for children who will take a stand against evil. If any children share about sexual assault that is occurring in their lives, it is your civic responsibility to report it. If you suspect abuse or know a child has acted out with another minor, you need to call the authorities to intervene. How do you start?

There is a fine line where trusted adults must perform a perfected balancing act of fact finding and not investigating. If trusted adults cross the line, they may impede the investigation, resulting in the accused going free; and the child's anxieties and lack of ability to trust intensify.

The following information is helpful to the police and child protective agencies:

- 1. Child's first and last names**
- 2. Child's home address and phone number**
- 3. Child's date of birth**
- 4. Child's sibling names and ages**
- 5. Child's school**
- 6. Details about the suspected abuse**
- 7. Details concerning perpetrator**
- 8. Details about the home that present a safety hazard for the investigator: drugs, guns, dogs, domestic violence**

Striking a balance with your questions

1. **Stick to the facts!** Facts promote the possibility of Child Protective Agencies pursuing the investigation. Statements that seem subjective: such as, "I am worried about Jane. She just doesn't seem like herself," do not typically support further investigations.

2. **Do not ask leading questions!** Asking questions while inserting possible facts can taint a child's testimony. "Did Daddy touch you there?" This inserts your opinion concerning who the abuser is. "Did someone touch you there?" This leaves an open door for the child's story, using his or her terminology.

3. **Let the child's voice be heard!** A child's innocent language authenticates a report. If adult terms are used to draw out information, such as, penis and French kisses, a child's testimonial seems coached. The vague terminology of "down there" or "wet kisses" reveals a child's perspective and not that of the adult reporting on behalf of a child. Use the child's words as you question, even if you are uncomfortable with his/her word choice. "My uncle touched my hoo ha."

"Where did he touch your hoo ha?" shows the child that he or she is heard.

Also, untrained adults may unintentionally add corroborative statements that may damage the outcome. The child's perspective must be preserved.

4. **Do not threaten or bribe!** This is an uncomfortable time for you and your child. The average abused child is used to performing out of fear or for rewards. This may just be another performance to them. They may be looking for an out. Children have been threatened that they can't go home until they have named an abuser. Others have been taunted to respond a certain way for a treat.

5. **Be encouraging!** Through a calm, compassionate demeanor, you can encourage a child to be open. Tell the child that you are thankful for them being brave enough to tell the truth. Ensure them that you appreciate the courage it took to be so truthful.

6. **Know when to stop!** If abuse just occurred, do not bathe the child. Also, do not allow them to go to the bathroom. Both may preserve physical evidence.

Also, do not continue to ask questions to accumulate all the gruesome details of the abuse. A child does not need to relive all the details repeatedly. You do not need to be traumatized by all of the details. The professional can take over after you have the initial information.

After you have the facts, call the police and CPS. Entrust the child to the professional investigators, but don't leave them. The National Child Abuse Hotline can assist you to the correct municipal police department or child protective services facility at 800-4-A-CHILD.



The Healing Process

Taking Time is Priceless

There is not a quick fix to healing through sexual abuse. Healing is a lifelong process. The various challenges we face in life, bring up unexpected flashbacks or reoccurring trauma. Truly those who have been sexually abused need a counselor whom they trust. It may take time to find the right counselor, but professional help is invaluable!

When I started to face the effects with my sexual abuse at the age of 25, I dove into individual and group therapy. I dedicated a year to personal revelation and healing. I wrote a book ready to help the world conquer their sexual abuse. For over ten years the book lay dormant. When I began *A Quarter Blue* in 2003, I looked back to that original manuscript and laughed at my ignorance. Healing does not have a time frame. I learned that it would take a lifetime to uncover all the areas that were affected by my sexual abuse. On my daughter's seventh birthday, I looked across the table and wept. How could someone harm such precious innocence? In an intimate moment with my husband a particular sexual incident came flooding back. My response to these memories or triggers is much healthier and quicker now, but they still come without warning. I am grateful that I am not bound by a time clock. Truth takes time and I am worth both.



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