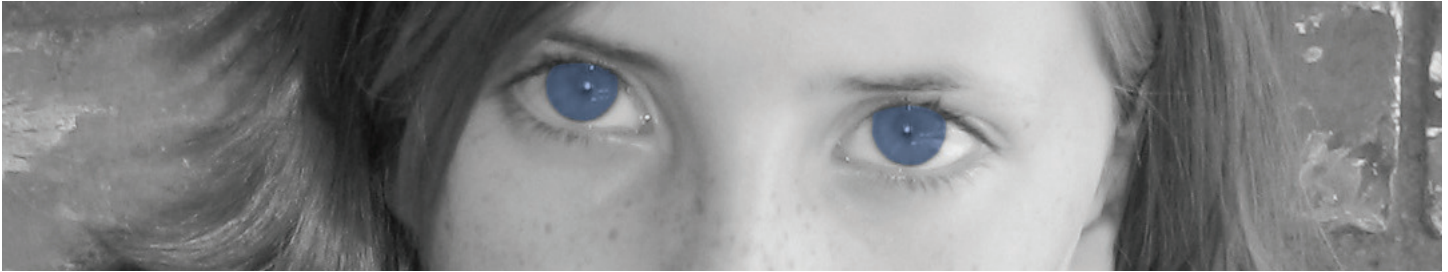


# **Educating Adults** to PROTECT & EMPOWER *Children*



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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 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. <sup>3</sup> 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.