

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION**

*Why Parents Need to Engage*

- 
1. Parents are the right people to impart child sexual abuse (CSA) information.
  2. Knowledge about CSA helps protect children. Lack of education leaves them vulnerable.
  3. Parents can influence child's knowledge and values.
  4. Parents can prepare their children and teach them the facts.
  5. Parents have more influence on children's decisions about sex than their friends (Albert, 2010).

### **So Why Don't Parents Discuss CSA?\***

- My child is too young to understand CSA (41%).
- It has not occurred to me to discuss CSA with my child (36%).
- I do not know how to explain CSA to my child (23%).
- The topic might frighten my child (21%).
- Sexual abuse is too difficult for me to discuss (16%).
- My child is not at risk for CSA (15%).
- I have not been able to find materials to help me talk to my child about CSA (15%).
- I do not know enough about CSA (11.5%).
- I am too embarrassed to discuss CSA with my child (6.6%).
- My child does not seem interested in the topic (5%).
- The topic of CSA is too painful to discuss with my child for person reasons (3%).
- Discussing CSA is against my religion (1.6%).

\*(Deblinger, Thakkar-Kolar, Berry, & Schroeder, 2010).

## **It is important to...**

1. Begin in the early childhood years before children are at risk of victimization (Kenny, 2010).
2. Repeat the message (Wurtele, Moreno, & Kenny, 2008).
3. Keep discussions developmentally appropriate.
4. Educate yourself about the protective factors that help reduce risks. (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/guide2014/guide.pdf>)
5. Be aware of any discomfort on your part.

## **What to Talk to Children About**

1. Promote healthy sexuality.
2. Teach correct names for body parts.
3. Establish touching boundaries.
4. Teach about touch.
5. Go beyond stranger danger.
6. Establish privacy rules in home.
7. Give permission to tell.
8. Talk about secrets/tricks/threats.
9. Educate on vulnerable situations.
10. Include social media/internet safety information.

Research shows preschool children know the names of body parts with the exception of their genitals (Kenny & Wurtele, 2008).

Teaching young children the correct names for all of their body parts promotes their development of a healthy, positive body image and helps the child disclose abuse if it occurs (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2007; Wurtele & Miller-Perrin, 1992).

## **When a Child Discloses Abuse**

- Stay calm and listen to child
- Tell them you believe them and are glad they told you.
- Tell child it is not their fault. Repeat.
- Report to professionals for investigation and help.
- Limit questions. Do not conduct an investigation.