



YOU ARE A TRUSTED ADULT

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BLUE SKY BRIDGE



BLUE SKY BRIDGE



A background image showing the lower half of a child riding a silver scooter on a paved surface. The child is wearing blue pants and brown sneakers. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

AGENDA

- Blue Sky Bridge / Child Advocacy Center
- Child Sexual Abuse
- How Kids Tell
- Why Kids Don't Tell
- Responding to Disclosures
- Questions & Answers

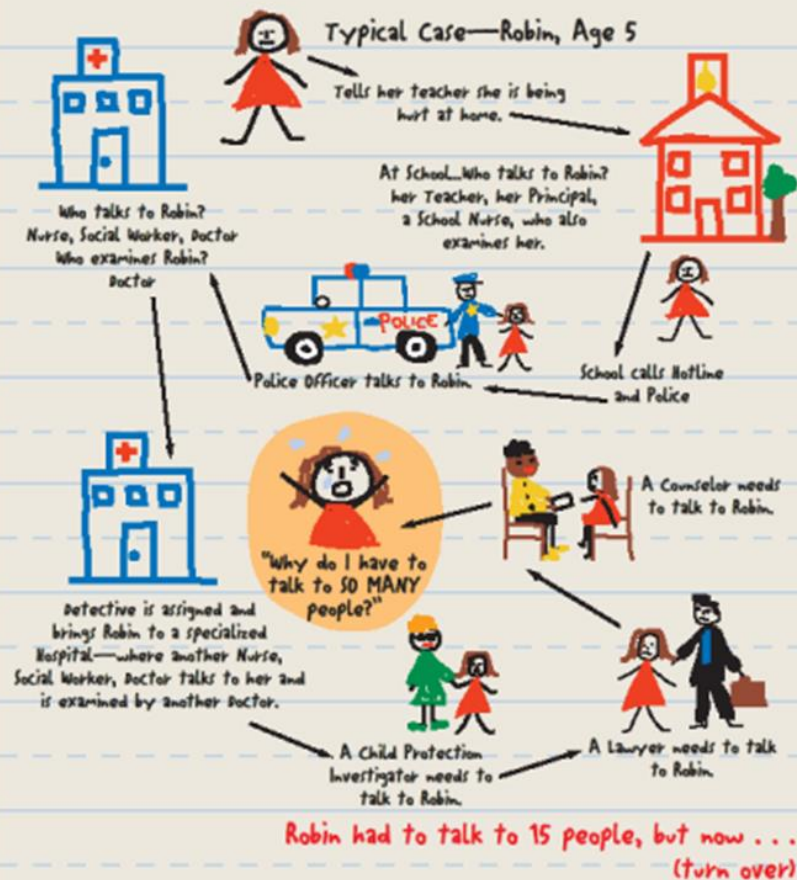


WHAT WE DO

- Supporting Child Abuse Investigations
 - Work with law enforcement, Housing & Human Services, and the District Attorney's Office
 - Facilitate fact finding forensic interviews for children
 - Provide support to non-offending family members
- Education & Prevention
 - Break the cycle of child sexual abuse through prevention education
- Therapy
 - Trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy for children and their families
 - Support groups for non-offending caregivers
- Medical
 - Non-acute medical exams

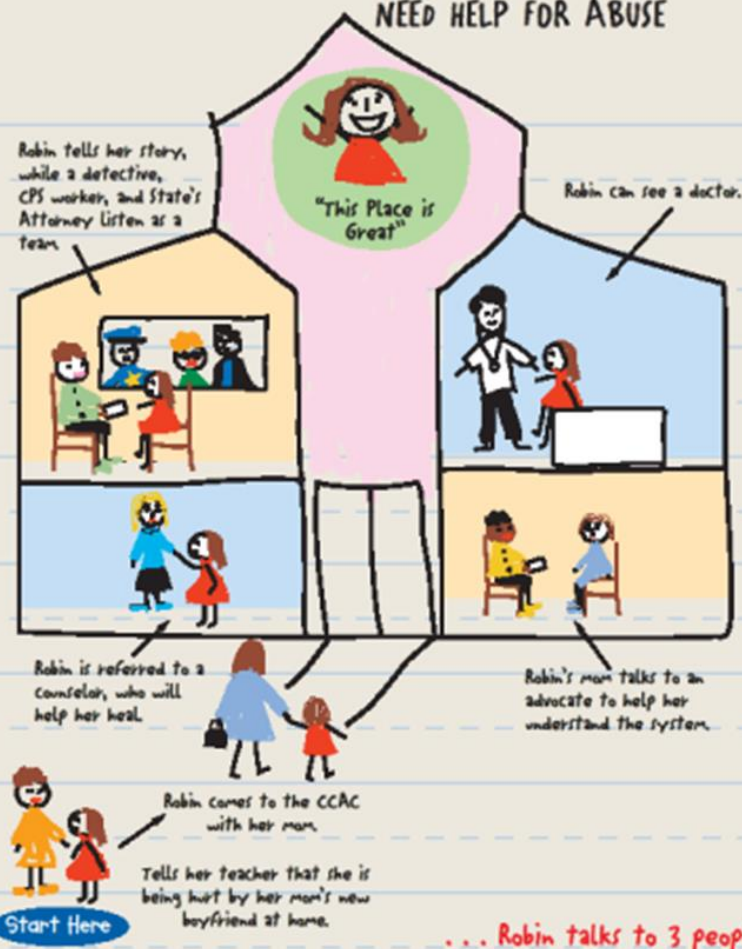
Changing the Child Abuse System

WHAT USED TO HAPPEN WHEN KIDS
NEEDED HELP FOR ABUSE

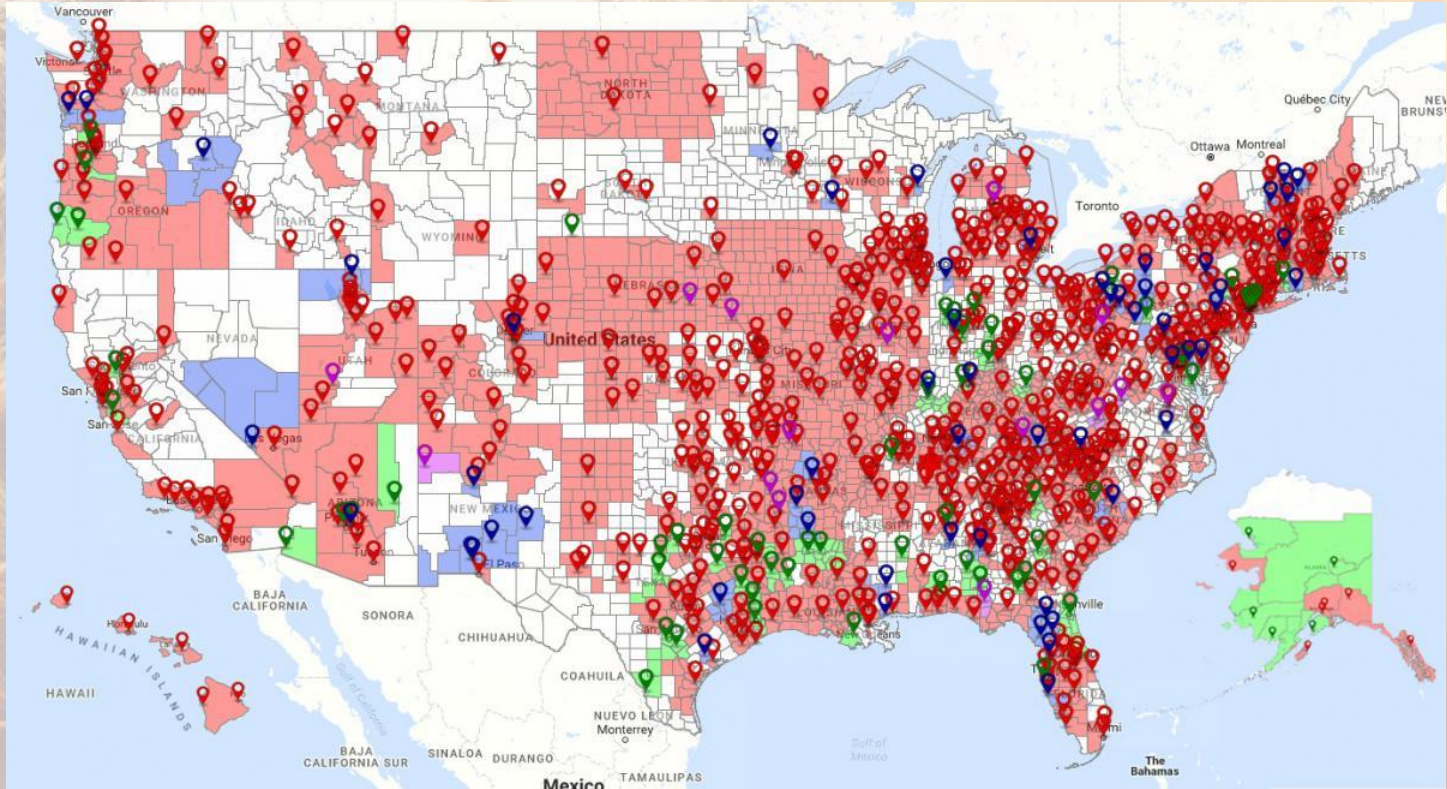


Changing the Child Abuse System

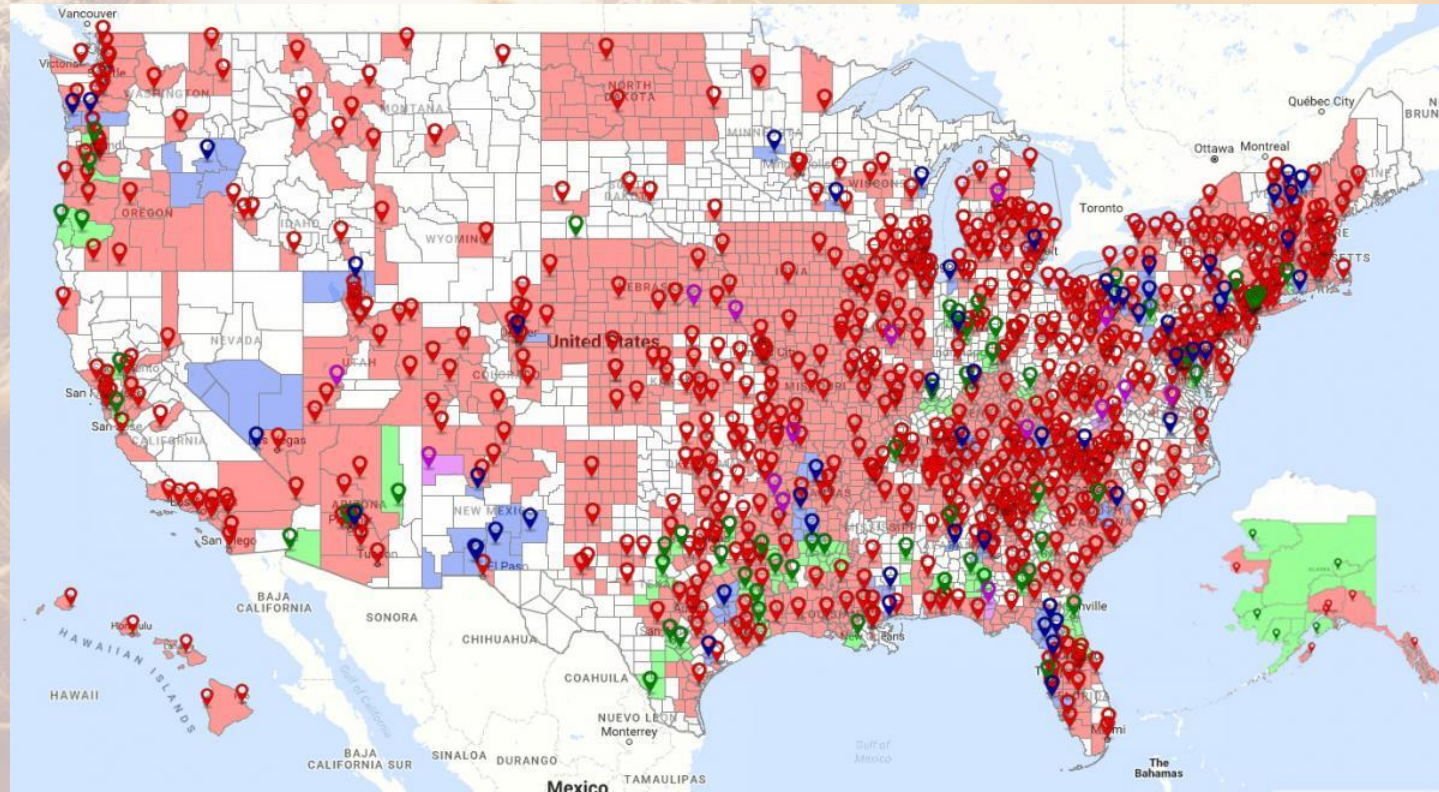
WHAT HAPPENS TODAY WHEN KIDS
NEED HELP FOR ABUSE



CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS



A map of the United States showing the locations of Child Advocacy Centers (CACs). The map is densely populated with red pins, indicating the presence of CACs across all states. The pins are concentrated in the eastern half of the country, particularly in the Northeast and the Southeast. The map also shows state boundaries and names, as well as major cities and bodies of water. The background of the slide features a close-up of a child's hands and a decorative border of colorful squares.





INCREASE YOUR KNOWLEDGE



TRUE OR FALSE

Elementary-age children are the most common victims of sexual abuse

True

Physical force is used to get children to comply with the offender's sexual request

False

1 in 10 cases of child sexual abuse are reported

True

At the age of 10, a child can be charged with a sex crime

True



SEXUAL ABUSE INCLUDES...

Touching Sexual Offenses

- Fondling
- Making a child touch an adult's sexual organ
- Penetration

Sexual Exploitation

- Engaging a child or soliciting a child for the purpose of prostitution
- Inappropriately filming or photographing a child

Non-touching Sexual Offenses

- Indecent exposure or exhibitionism
- Exposing children to pornography
- Exposing a child to the act of sexual intercourse
- Masturbating in front of a child



IN THE STATE OF COLORADO

5898 children interviewed
69% female
31% male

78% were reported cases of sexual abuse

10% were reported cases of physical abuse

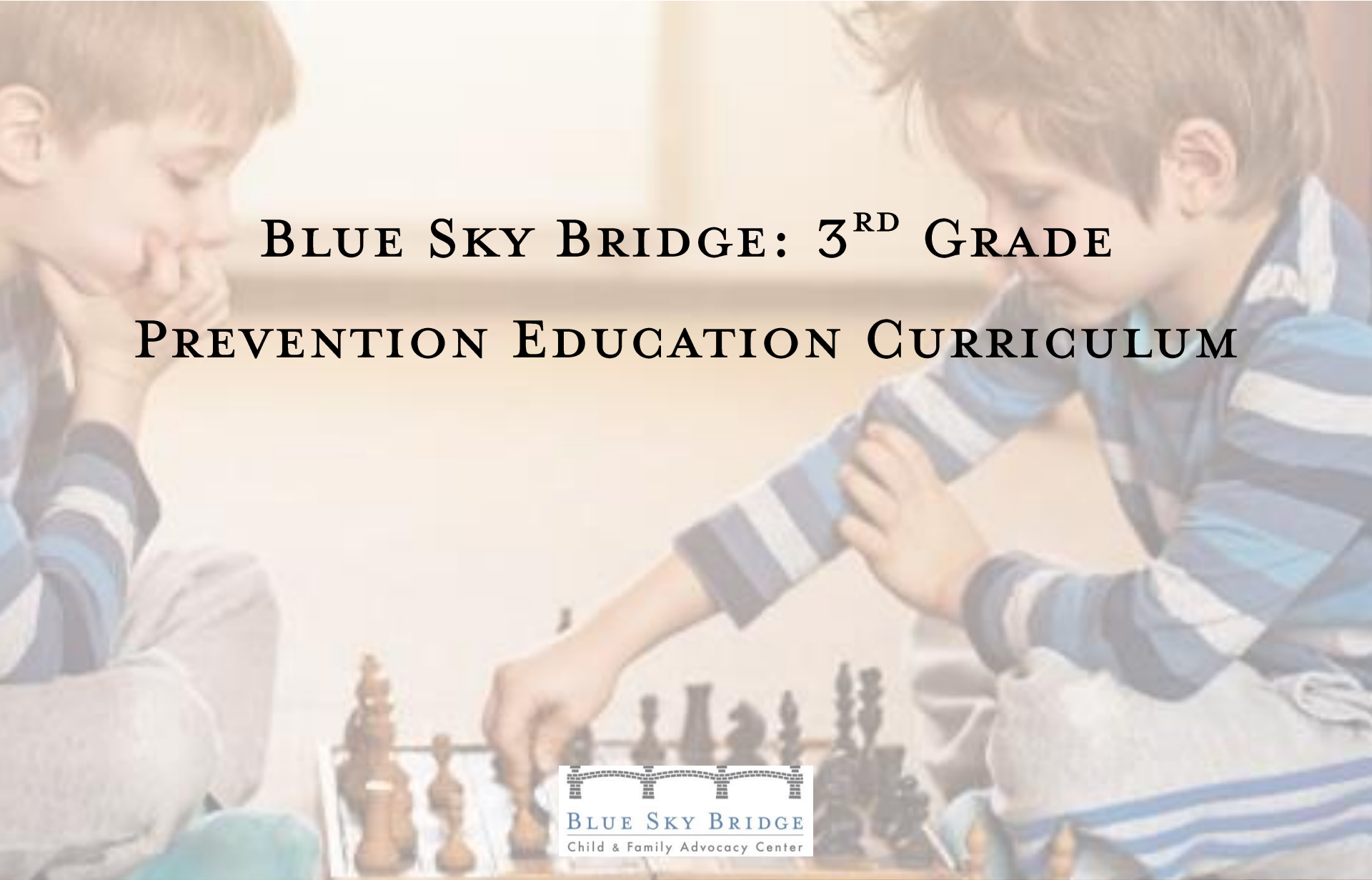
68% of victims were 12 years old or younger



BLUE SKY BRIDGE STATISTICS 2017

- 305 children interviewed
 - 66% female
 - 34% male
- 74% were reported cases of sexual abuse
- 8% were reported cases of physical abuse
- 60% of victims were under 12 years old
- 93% of offenders were known to child

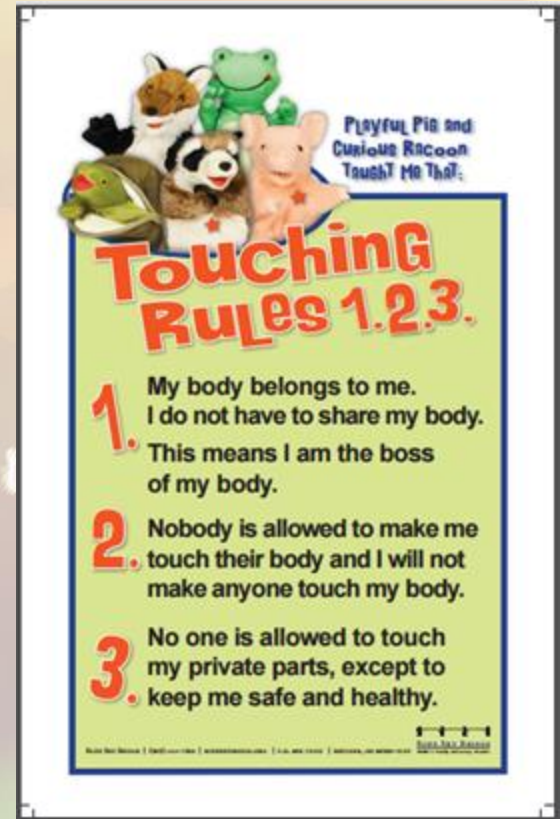




BLUE SKY BRIDGE: 3RD GRADE PREVENTION EDUCATION CURRICULUM

3RD GRADE CURRICULUM

- Private Parts
- Touching Rules
- Safe vs. Unsafe Touch
- Secrets and Surprises
- Trusted Adults



3RD GRADE CURRICULUM

- NO, GO, TELL Safety Plan
- Puppet Show
- Real Life Situations
- Model and Practice



Buddy Fox, Curious Raccoon and Playful Pig say:



NO! NO! Means if anyone is asking you to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable, weird or sad, or hurts you, **you have the right to say NO!**

GO! GO! Means **leave the situation** if you can do so safely. If a situation gives you that sick or icky feeling in your stomach, **trust your feelings!**

TELL! TELL! Means, as soon as you can, **tell a trusted adult**. If that adult doesn't listen, go to another trusted adult and **keep telling** until someone listens and believes you. **And remember, it is not your fault.**

 **Family Discussion**

Your child has learned a lot in the last three sessions with Blue Sky Bridge. As with anything, practice and continued communication is key for behaviors to become second nature. We hope that you implement the touching rules, the "no secrets" policy and regularly review your child's trusted adults. A good practice is to provide scenarios or "what ifs" for your child. This will help your child to practice and become confident using the NO, GO, TELL plan.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

- ...is the new smart
- ..has been shown to increase academic performance on standardized tests by 11 percent
- ...is key to being a successful adult
- ...is reinforced and modeled in our program





CHILDHOOD SEXUALITY

From Healthy to Problematic

IT'S A SPECTRUM

- Green Light Behavior
- Yellow Light Behavior
- Red Light Behavior



REMEMBER...

- Behavioral symptoms alone cannot confirm sexual abuse
- Behaviors are separated by prepubescent and post-pubescent.





DISCLOSURES



BLUE SKY BRIDGE
Child & Family Advocacy Center

YOU ARE A TRUSTED ADULT

- Remember this
- Kids might tell you things
- Modeling healthy behavior
- Reaction



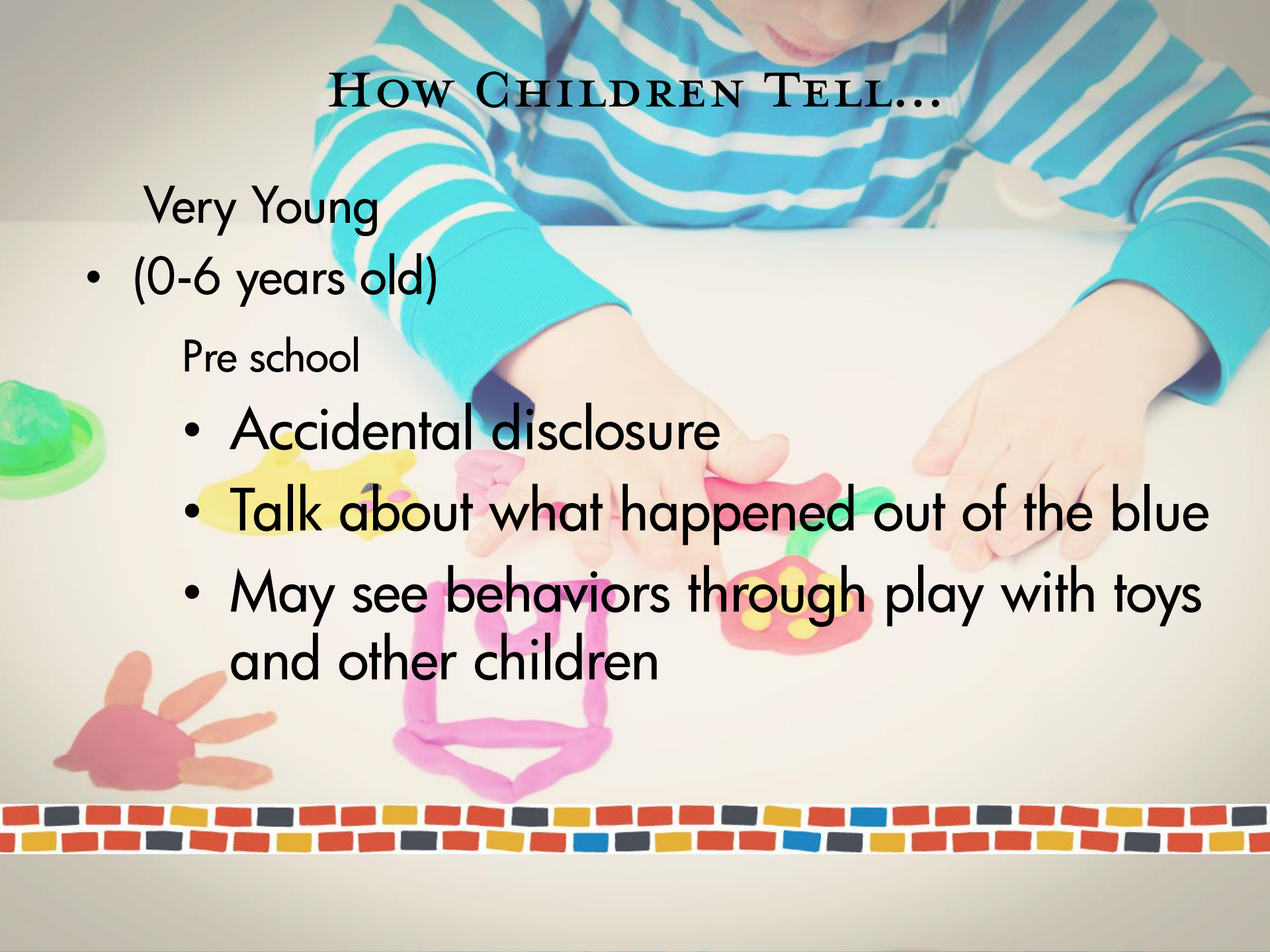
HOW CHILDREN TELL...

Very Young

- (0-6 years old)

Pre school

- Accidental disclosure
- Talk about what happened out of the blue
- May see behaviors through play with toys and other children



HOW CHILDREN TELL...

- Latency Age
- (7-12 years old)
 - Accidental disclosure
 - Behaviors that are sexual in nature, seen with other same age children or children who are younger
 - Children tell a trusted friend who tells an adult
 - Children tell a counselor or teacher at school
 - Parents discover the abuse, walk in on it, etc.
 - Children tell their parents



WHY KIDS DON'T TELL

- They may be afraid of not being believed or being judged.
- Shame, embarrassment, guilt, confusion.
- Threats by abuser to hurt them, their family or pet if they tell.
- Not know who/how to tell (most kids tell someone other than parent).
- They may not recognize that they have been abused (especially young kids).
- Afraid of what will happen (taken away from parents, break apart family).



DISCLOSURE

- The bravery of active disclosure
- Different Stages of disclosure
 - Denial
 - Tentative
 - Active
 - Recantation
 - Reaffirmation
- Calm and Neutral



THE FIVE “R’S”

- **Remain**
 - Calm
- **Respect**
 - The child
- **Refrain**
 - From conducting your own investigation
- **Refuse**
 - To discuss outside of the appropriate people
- **Report**
 - The disclosure to the appropriate agency
 - Contact your local Law Enforcement Agency or Department of Human Services



HANDLING A DISCLOSURE

What to say...

- “Thanks for telling me”
- “I’m proud of you”
- “I believe you”
- “Tell me more about that”
- “It’s not your fault”
- “I’m really glad you told me”
- “It took a lot of courage to tell me”
- “I’m going to call someone whose job it is to help keep children safe”

What not to say...

- “Why didn’t you tell me sooner”
- “You must have misunderstood”
- “Are you sure that’s what happened?”
- **Avoid asking “why” questions**



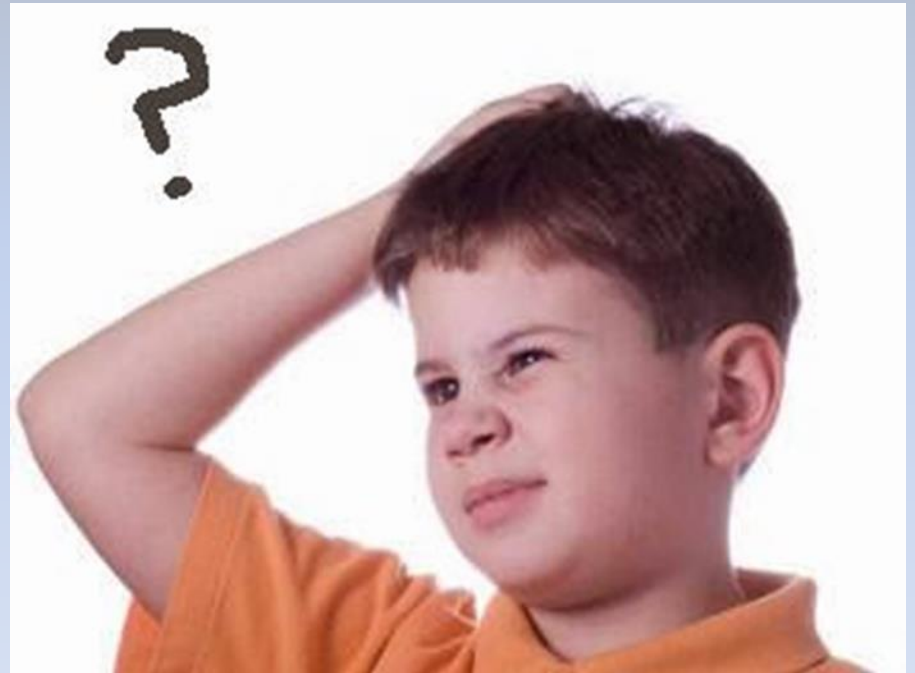
IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Make it safe for the child
- Handle things appropriately and calmly
- The less times they are investigated the better
- It's not our job



CHILDREN'S MEMORY

- Suggestibility
- Leading questions
- The more times they tell a story



A child just disclosed sexual abuse to me. **WHAT DO I DO NOW?**

1. Say, "I believe you, and it's not your fault."

DO ask open-ended questions: "Then what happened?"

DON'T express anger or disbelief.

2. Conduct a "minimal fact" interview.

DO determine what, where, when, and by whom, if possible.

DON'T ask leading questions or probe for details.

3. Report immediately.

DO tell law enforcement/child protective services.

DON'T attempt further investigation.

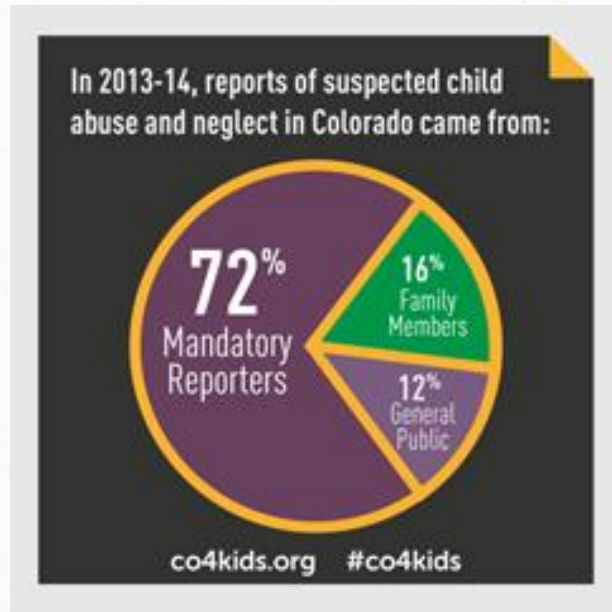
DON'T promise not to tell anyone.



**MORE THAN 90% OF THE TIME,
THE CHILD IS TELLING THE TRUTH.**



IT'S A GOOD THING TO BE WRONG ABOUT



Remember, hesitations are normal but not reporting is **ILLEGAL**



BARRIERS TO REPORTING

- Not wanting to get involved –Your silence and secrecy works to aid the abuser.
- Someone else will report – Most children don't tell multiple adults so you are likely the only one who knows.
- Fear that reporting will make the situation worse – Law Enforcement and Housing and Human Services are here to help protect children and families.
- Fear that reporting will have negative impact on your relationship with the child/family – This isn't about you, it is about being a voice for someone who is vulnerable.



KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN

- “I’ve noticed.....”
- “Is everything okay?”
- “You can talk to me about anything that is going on in your life.”
- “You said you don’t want to go home, I would like to hear more about that.”



MAKE A REPORT!

Colorado has one toll-free phone number to report child abuse and neglect 24/7, 365 days a year. Please call the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at

1-844-CO-4-KIDS (1-844-264-5437)

to report concerns about a child's safety and well-being.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT...

- Safety Assessment
 - Home safety, medical concerns, minimal facts interview
- Forensic Interview
- Investigation by Law Enforcement and/or Human Services
- Self-Help for Caregivers
 - Anxiety is transferrable
 - The number one factor in children recanting is an unsupportive caregiver



HOW DOES THE CAC MODEL WORK?



Core Function of CAC



Function Provided by a Team Member

LAW ENFORCEMENT



The role of local law enforcement is grounded in public safety

If not criminal in nature, law enforcement may not take action

Immediate Response

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The role of CPS is to ensure that a child's home is safe

If the family/caretaker is not the alleged abuser, CPS may not take action



Priority Assigned
(24-72 hours)

Child is brought to Children's Advocacy Center

Joint Investigation Begins
Forensic Interview
Evidence Collected
Photos Taken
Witness Interview
Medical Treatment and Exam



CAC coordinates Case Review with all team members, including law enforcement, prosecution, Child Protective Services, the forensic interviewer, a mental health provider, a medical professional, and a family advocate

Case presented to District Attorney

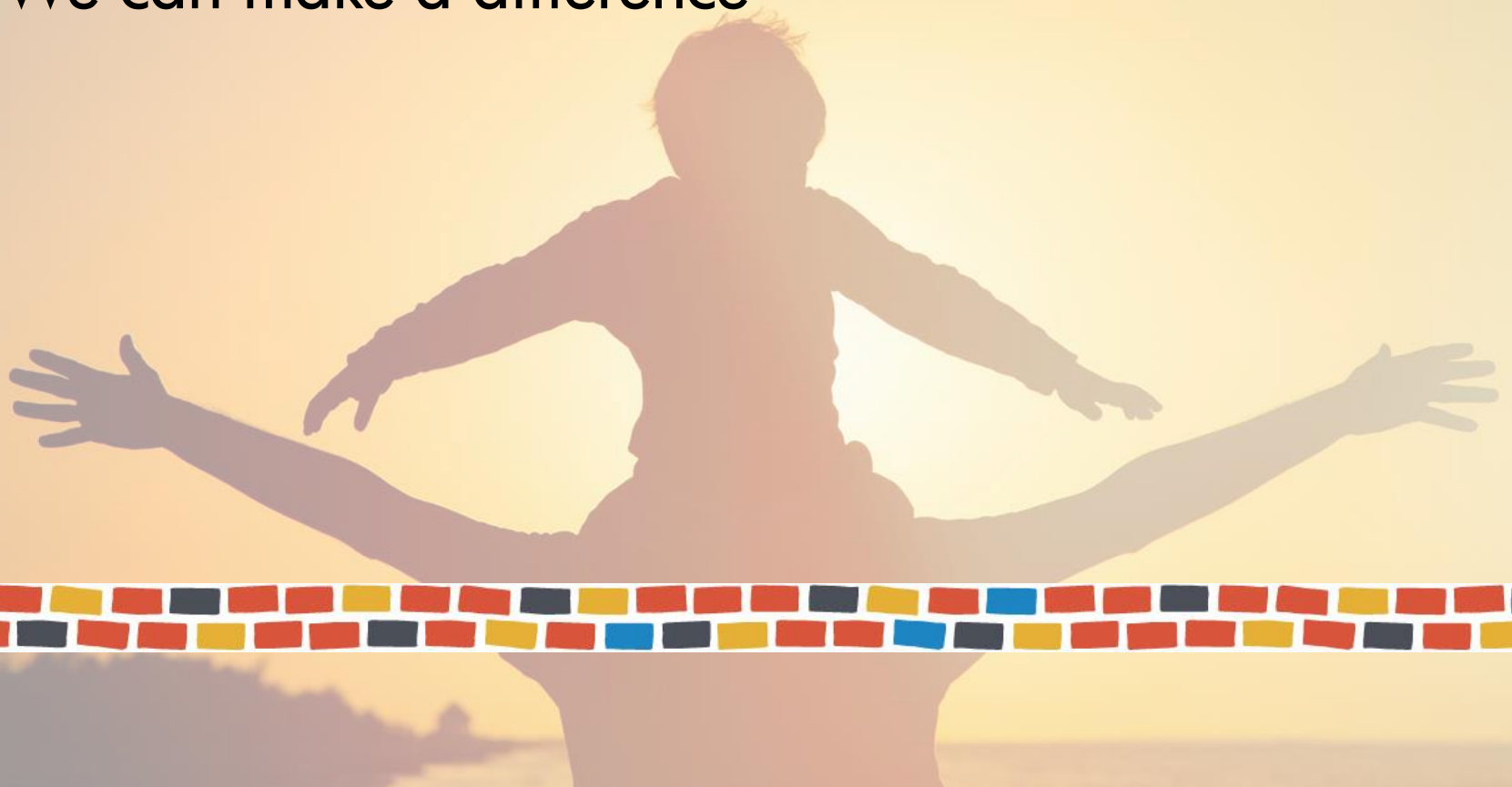
Suspect Charged or Case Refused

Child & family receive mental health services—
Family advocate works with family to assess critical resources and provide support as the case moves through the justice system

Child Removed from Home, or
Case Opened for Services, or
Case Closed

THE GOOD NEWS

- Awareness is growing
- More kids are learning body safety
- We can make a difference



QUESTIONS?





FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT

BLUESKYBRIDGE.ORG

OR CALL 303-444-1388

*"To be trusted is a greater
compliment than being loved."*

George MacDonald