



**Prevent Child Abuse**  
Missouri™

**Missouri Coordinated School Health Conference**  
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**Building School Environments that**  
**Prevent Child Sexual Abuse**



# CARE

- This presentation may impact each of us in a unique way
- Please care for yourself during our time together
- If you need addition support, there are resources on your handout

# Presentation Objectives

01

Learn the facts

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02

Why don't we take action in schools to protect children?

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03

What can schools do to create safer environments and healthy relationships?

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04

Next steps- how can you take action?

# Definition

Child sexual abuse refers to the involvement of a child (person less than 18 years old) in sexual activity that violates the laws or social taboos of society and that he/she/they:

- does not fully comprehend
- does not consent to or is unable to give informed consent to, or
- is not developmentally prepared for and cannot give consent to

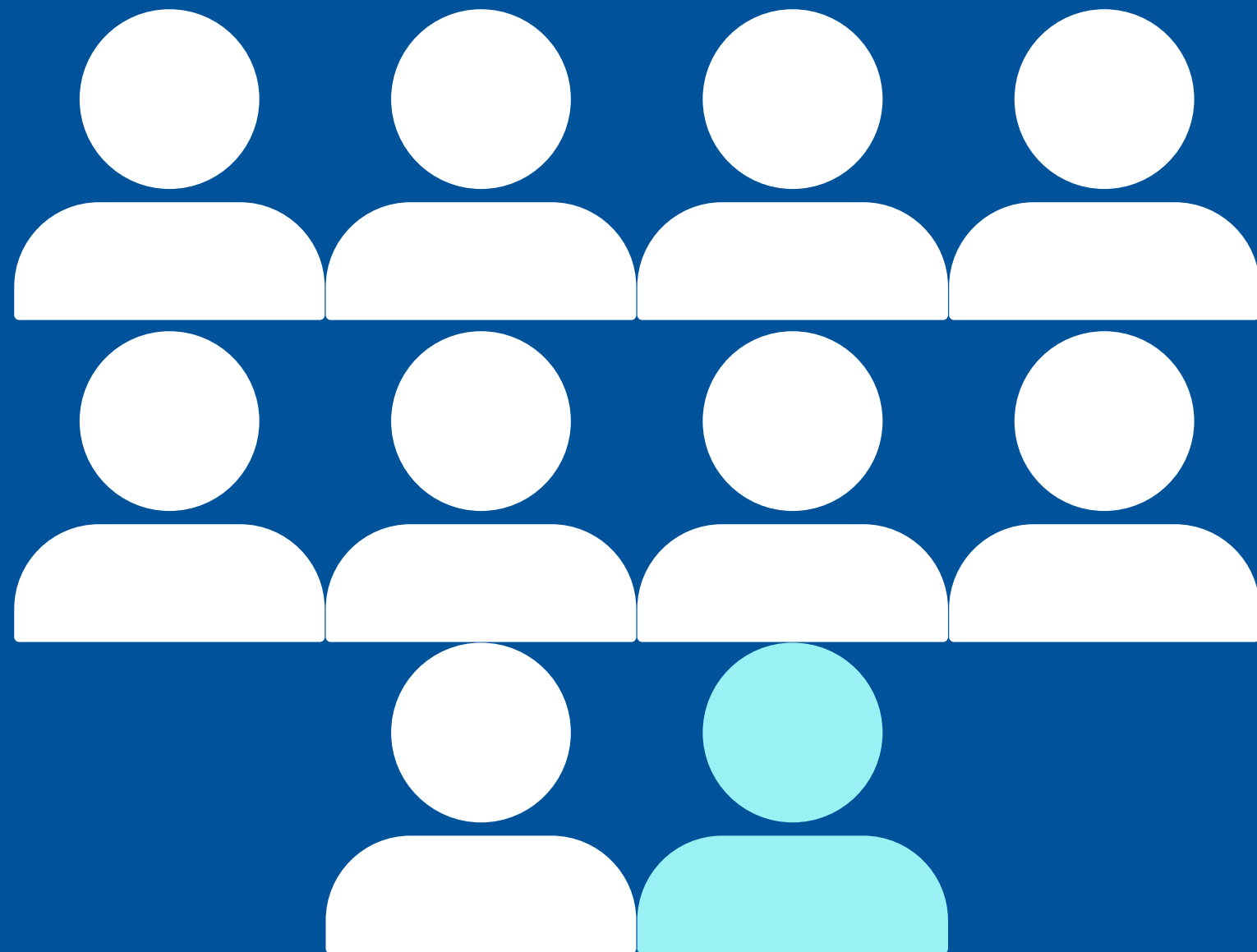


[cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childsexualabuse/fastfact.html](https://cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childsexualabuse/fastfact.html)

# The Issue

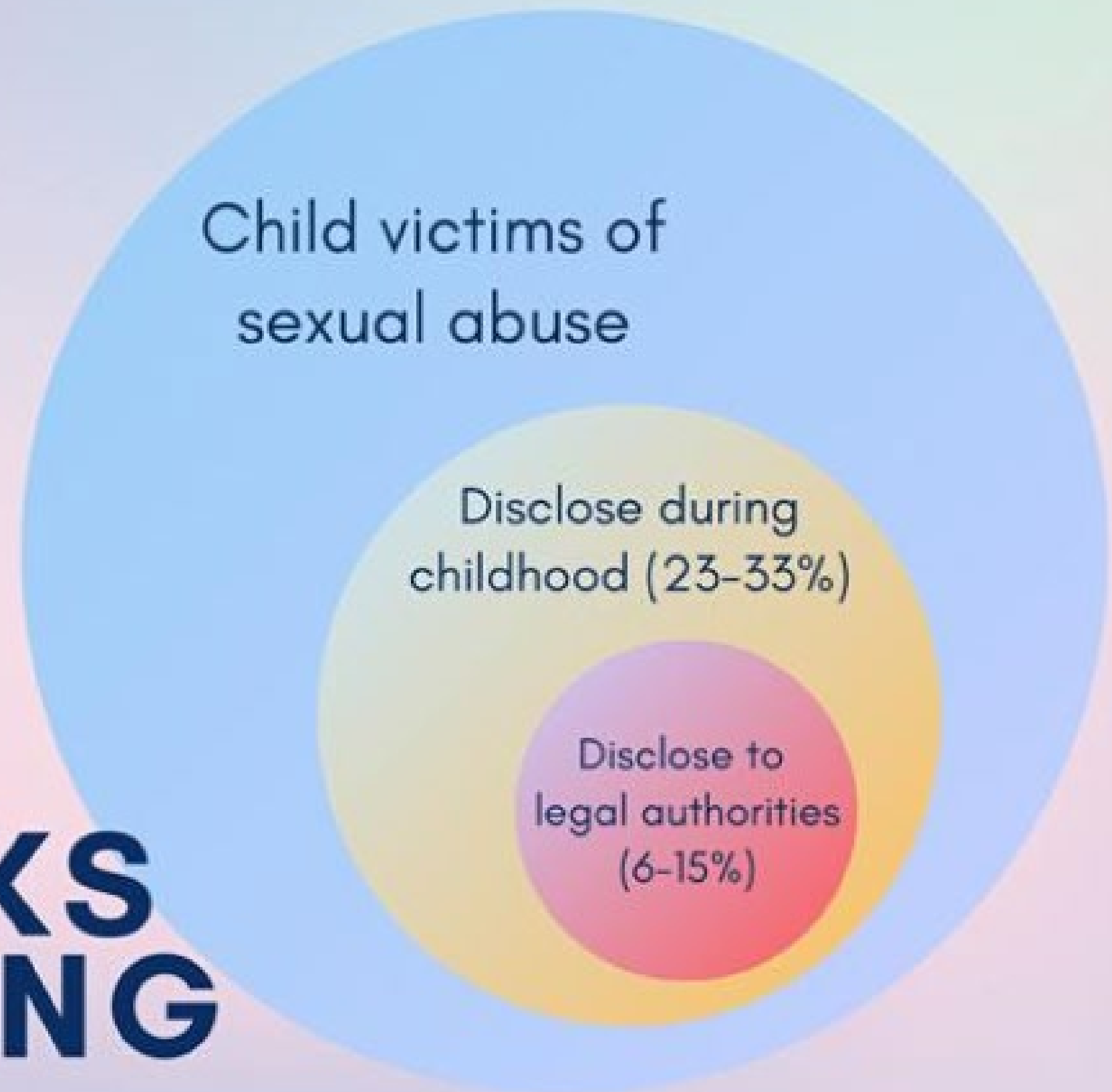
One in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday.

Downing et al, 2020 & Dept of Health and Human Services  
2020



Why authorities identify a non-representative percentage of child sexual abuse cases.

# ROADBLOCKS TO REPORTING



# The Facts

0 1 Adolescent girls are at the  
highest risk

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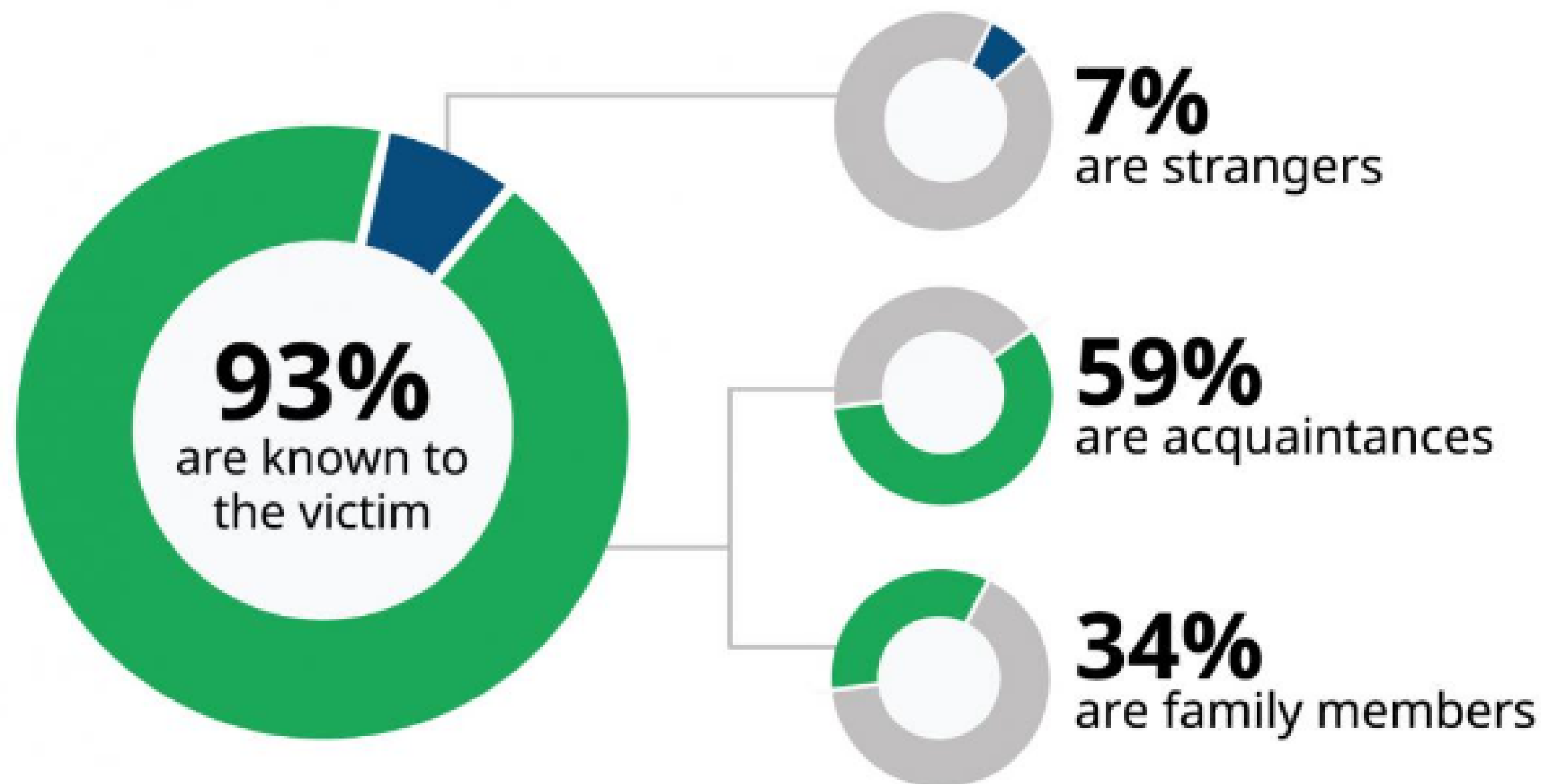
0 2 Short- and long-term physical, mental,  
and emotional health consequences

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0 3 Increase in risk for experiencing  
violence later in life

# CHILD VICTIMS OFTEN KNOW THE PERPETRATOR

Among cases of child sexual abuse reported to law enforcement:





# This includes ...

- Up to 10% of children are victimized in educational settings (Shakeshaft, 2004)
- Approximately 1% of respondents reported CSA experienced in the context of Youth Serving Organizations. (Shattuck, Finkelhor, Turner, & Hamby, 2016).
- More than 70% of children who are sexually abused are abused by a peer. (Gerwirtz-Meyden & Finkelhor, 2020)



Charol Shakeshaft PHD, Virginia Commonwealth  
Univ., TedX Youth@RVA, November 20 20

Why don't  
we act to  
protect  
children?

0 1

We don't know what we are  
seeing- boundary violations

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0 2

Belief- It doesn't happen  
here/We are all good people

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0 3

Its not that bad

From child needing to protect  
themselves to



Adult



Responsibility

There is no other health issue in our history  
that we have asked children to cure or solve  
on their own.

# What can we do?

01

Clear Policies and  
Procedures- Codes of  
Conduct

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02

Training/Empowerment -  
Identifying boundary  
violations and being active  
bystander

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03

Education on the harm of  
child sexual abuse



# Awareness to Action ↙ Missouri

MISSOURI

## KIDSFIRST

Ending Child Abuse NOW

## MOCOSA

Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault



### Children's Trust Fund

Missouri's Foundation For Child Abuse Prevention



awareness to action

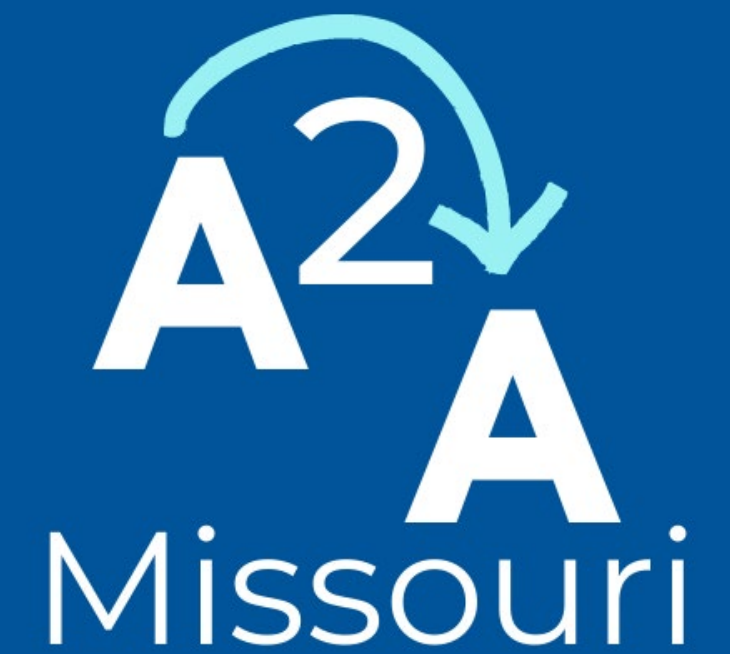
# Prevent Child Sexual Abuse



Take Action to Protect Children

This program has been adapted from "Awareness to Action" developed by Children's Wisconsin and the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board'. Missouri KidsFirst and MOCOSA thank these partners for their collaboration and support!

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## What?

A roadmap for organizations who value child safety and wellbeing

## How?

- 3 hour workshop and 6 month collaborative period
- movement towards best practices and systems that prevent child sexual abuse

## Who?

- any organization that works with children and adolescents
- 2 or more participants from each organization are needed to commit to the 6 month process and need to have access to decision makers to enact change
- organization must complete a pre- and post- organizational assessment





A2A  
Missouri

is ...

- A look at the "WHYS" behind our policies, procedures and prevention efforts
- An opportunity to create an organizational culture that centers child safety and welfare
- An opportunity to work with other like-minded organizations to share experience and resources

Practice # 1 Screening and Selecting Employees and Volunteers

Practice # 2 Guidelines for Interactions Between Individuals

Practice # 3 Monitoring Behavior

Practice # 4 Ensuring Safe Environments

Practice # 5 Responding to inappropriate behavior, breaches in policy, and allegations and suspicions of abuse

Practice # 6 Training about sexual abuse prevention for employees and volunteers

# A2A Roadmap

# After the workshop

0 1

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2 weeks after - We will reach out to see how your action plan is shaping up!

0 2

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3 months- Group check in- provide resources and support!

0 3

6 months- Final wrap up! How has your organization created safer environments for children?

# Training



 **DARKNESS TO LIGHT'S  
STEWARDS OF CHILDREN®**

**LEARN TO PREVENT,  
RECOGNIZE, & REACT  
RESPONSIBLY TO CHILD  
SEXUAL ABUSE.**

**D2l.org**

## 5 STEPS TO PROTECTING CHILDREN™



STEP 1

### LEARN THE FACTS

If we don't understand child sexual abuse, we can't end it. It is highly likely that you know a child who has been or is being abused. Experts estimate that one in 10 children are sexually abused before their 18th birthday.



STEP 2

### MINIMIZE OPPORTUNITY

Safe environments can help reduce the risk for abuse. More than 80% of sexual abuse cases occur in isolated, one-on-one situations. Make sure interactions with children can be observed and interrupted.



STEP 3

### TALK ABOUT IT

Talking openly breaks down barriers and reduces stigma. Children often keep abuse a secret, but talking openly about our bodies, sex, and boundaries can encourage children to share and feel safe.



STEP 4

### RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS

Signs of abuse aren't always obvious, but they are often there. Emotional or behavioral changes are often the most common signs, rather than physical evidence. Trauma may be the root of what is typically labelled 'bad' or 'difficult' behavior.



STEP 5

### REACT RESPONSIBLY

It's our responsibility to react appropriately to suspicion, disclosure, or discovery of abuse. Only 4% to 8% of reports of all sexual abuse are false. Understand how to respond to risky behaviors and suspicions or reports of abuse.

**These steps form a framework for preventing child sexual abuse.**

They can help you become aware of the scope of the issue, take actionable steps toward both preventing and responding to abuse, and create safer environments for the children in your life. They act as a guide for developing protective behaviors against abuse.

To learn practical ways to effectively implement all five steps, Darkness to Light offers *Stewards of Children®*, an in-depth training available both online and in-person.

To learn more or get trained, visit [www.D2L.org](http://www.D2L.org)

# Training

- Free
- Virtual

Mandate Reporter Training

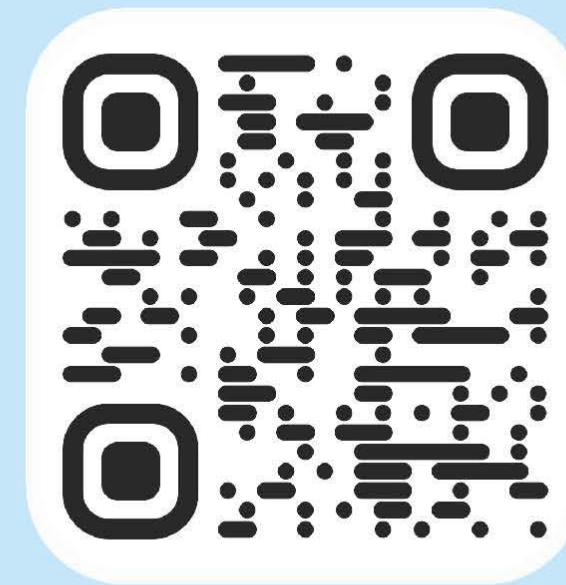
[protectmokids.com](http://protectmokids.com)

## Take Missouri Kids First's Updated Empowering Mandated Reporter Training!

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**KIDSFIRST**  
Ending Child Abuse Now

As a mandated reporter, it can be difficult to keep up with new legislation and emerging child protection research. This training provides **up-to-date information** on the legal responsibilities of mandated reporters, the indicators of abuse and/or neglect, how to respond to suspicions of abuse and/or neglect and how and when to make a report.

The updated version includes education on: **reporting bias, poverty vs. neglect, cultural responsiveness, child sexual abuse prevention education requirements for students and additional warning signs of child injuries.**



### The training...

- is easily accessible online and mobile friendly
- is free to the learner
- is approved for two CEUs through the MO Workshop Calendar
- includes a completion certification

**Scan Here To Access the Training**

OR VISIT [HTTP://PROTECTMOKIDS.COM/](http://PROTECTMOKIDS.COM/)



# One Simple Act

- Talk to another adult at your school about this presentation
- Get comfortable about talking about healthy sexual development and child sexual abuse prevention
- Think about how you can make one situation safer



To report abuse in Missouri call 1-800-392-3738

If a child is in immediate danger call 911

- You are not required to provide proof. Anyone who makes a good faith report based on reasonable grounds is immune from prosecution.

Help/crisis lines if you or someone you know needs support:

- Darkness to Light 1-866-FOR-LIGHT (866-367-5444)
  - Crisis Text line: Text "LIGHT" to 741741
- RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE

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