

In Search of the Bottom Line: What Every Youth Serving Organization Needs to Know

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The agenda

- Ten things we need to know
- Ten things we need to do
- What YSO's mean to abused children—resiliency research



Ten things YSO's need to know



1. Sex offenders are drawn to youth serving organizations

“Any situation that provides ideal conditions for pedophiles will draw them, and it will be very difficult to distinguish them from their nonpedophilic and entirely moral colleagues...boarding schools, overnight camps, male choirs—any setting that puts groups of kids regularly together under the supervision and care of a ‘counselor’ or other adult for overnight trips will draw pedophiles...” Dr. Anna Salter



2. Faith based YSO’s may be particularly attractive to sex offenders

“If children can be silenced and the average person is easy to fool, many offenders report that religious people are even easier to fool than most people.”

Anna Salter



3. Sex offenders are manipulative

“Very few of us have ever been suspected of a crime, and fewer still have been interviewed by the police about one. Under such circumstances, detection apprehension would be very high for most of us...But that would change had we practiced lying over serious matters every day, had we lived a double life, had we been questioned by upset parents or by police numerous times in the past. You are never going to run into a child molester who is not a practiced liar, even if he is not a natural one.” (From the book *Predators* page 202)



4. Offenders often select the easiest target

- Q. At church, you did not molest all the children. How did you choose?
- A. "First of all you start the grooming process from day one...the children that you're interested in...You find a child you might be attracted to...For me, it might be nobody fat. It had to be a you know, a nice looking child...You maybe look at a kid that doesn't have a father image at home, or a father that cares about them...if you've got a group of 25 kids, you might find 9 that are appealing...then you start looking at their family backgrounds. You find out all you can...which ones are the most accessible...you get it down to one that is the easiest target, and that's the one you do."



5. Offenders may act even if others present

- 54.9% of child molesters offended when another child present (The Tricky Part by Martin Moran)
- 23.9% offended when another adult present Underwood, et al, *Do sexual offenders Molest when Other Persons are Present?* 11(3) Journal of Research and Treatment (1999)
- Note—it may be subtle (under the blankets)
- Why? Increases power over child, the chance of getting caught enhances arousal, etc.



6. Most child abuse cases are never reported

- **Only 40% of maltreatment cases and 35% of the most serious cases known to mandated reporters are reported (Finkelhor 1990)**
- **65% of social workers, 53% of physicians and 58% of physicians assistants do not report all cases of suspected abuse (Delaronde, et al, 2000)**
- **2001 study of 197 teachers: only 26% would report familial abuse & only 11% at hands of fellow teacher (Child Abuse & Neglect)**



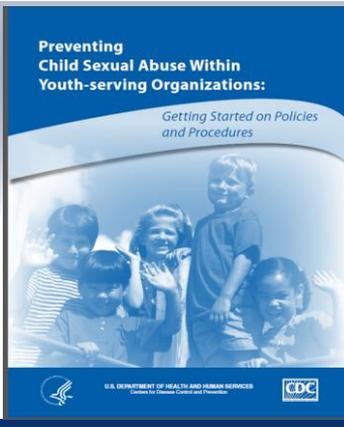
**7. Even when reported,
most cases not investigated**

- Only 50% of the nation's *identified* abused children received child protection investigation and only 30% of the children suffering "serious harm" received child protection investigation (NIS-4 2010)
- NIS-4 researchers labeled "serious harm" as child abuse or neglect cases in which "an act or omission result in demonstrable harm."



**8. We often
focus on CSA**

- Pressure from parents
- Pressure from the media
- Pressure from lawyers
- Its less messy to focus on CSA by coaches, volunteers, employees than abuse in the home



**9. If we primarily focus on CSA, we won't
protect the majority of abused children**

- Neglect – 78.3%
- Physical Abuse – 17.8%
- Psychological maltreatment – 17.6%
- Sexual Abuse – 9.5%
- Medical neglect - 2.4 %

**Percentages exceed 100% because report may
have more than one type of maltreatment**

U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services, Children's Bureau, Child Maltreatment Report 2009, (last visited 8/2011)



Most children are abused in the home

- Percentage of children abused by biological parents or non-biological parent or partner
 - 100% of neglected children
 - 93% of emotionally abused children
 - 91% of physically abused children
 - 60% of sexually abused children
- NIS 4 (2010)
- 22% of sexually abused children were abused by someone in authority (clergy, teacher, YSO) (Huot 1999)



10. Most children abused in more than one way

- Almost 66% of the sample was exposed to more than one type of victimization, 30% experienced five or more types, and 10% experienced 11 or more different forms of victimization in their lifetimes.
- Poly-victims comprise a substantial portion of the children who would be identified by screening for an individual victimization type, such as sexual assault or witnessing parental violence.
- Poly-victimization is more highly related to trauma symptoms than experiencing repeated victimizations of a single type and explains a large part of the associations between individual forms of victimization and symptom levels.
 - (Turner, Finkelhor, et al, 2010)



Ten things YSO's need to do



1. Follow the CDC standards

- Screening/selection of employees & volunteers
- Guidelines on interactions
- Monitoring behavior
- Ensuring safe environments
- Responding to inappropriate behavior
- Training of employees, caregivers, youth

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations:
Getting Started on Policies and Procedures

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Education and training

- CDC recommends training for:
 - Employees/volunteers
 - Children
 - Parents
- CDC recommends course content

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Research supports personal safety training

- “Ample empirical evidence” to support personal safety training (Finkelhor 2007)
- Children more likely to use self-protection techniques if instructed (Finkelhor 1995)
- In person training much more effective
- Make clear the difference between sinning and being the victim of sin

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2. Broaden training to include physical abuse



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Why this is important

- Physical signs of abuse may be easier to detect—particularly in YSO's where much of the child's body is visible (swimming, gymnastics, track, etc)
- If we detect physical abuse and report it, evidence of other forms of abuse may be discovered by the authorities

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Hitting children and the law

- Parents can use "reasonable force"
- What is unreasonable? (blows that leave marks, blows to vital organs, blows to the head, blows that are clearly not discipline)

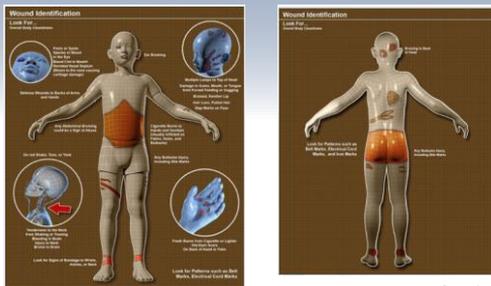
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Location of injuries

- Children are forward moving and frontal explorers, most accidental injuries are to “frontal” locations (forehead, nose, chin, palms, elbows, shins)
- Injuries to buttocks, genitalia, abdomen, back, lateral areas of body more likely to indicate abuse
- Does child’s description make sense? (the coffee table account)



Location of injuries



Suspicious injuries

- Always bruised—particularly in unlikely areas
- “Control” injuries (hair, arms, etc)
- “Patterned” injuries (hand slap—2 or 3 lines)











Hand Print on face



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3. Broaden training on emotional abuse



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Why this is important



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The Impact of Emotional Maltreatment

- Verbal abuse was more detrimental than physical or sexual abuse in terms of victims' self-directed anger and pessimism about their futures
(Ney, 1986, Child Abuse & Neglect)
- "Recent research has implicated emotional abuse as a strong, possibly stronger, predictor than physical abuse of internalizing disorders, externalizing disorders, social impairment, low self-esteem, suicidal behavior, psychiatric diagnoses, psychiatric hospitalizations, and long-term psychological functioning."
(Hammarman, 2002, Child Maltreatment)

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Include in training signs of Neglect (physical or emotional)

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Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care



Consider the possibility of neglect when the parent or other adult caregiver:

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner (child with sign on neck)
- Is abusing alcohol or other drugs



4. Expand or implement ACE training



Why this is important

- In the absence of an outcry from a child, or witnessing abuse, or a confession from an offender, the clearest manifestation of abuse may come through ACE characteristics.
- What if we saw ACE characteristics, and then asked?



5. MR training works



Reasons for failure to report

- **Insufficient evidence**
- **Lack of certainty**
- **Belief report will cause additional harm**
- **Need to maintain good relationship with patients, clients, parents**
- **Ambiguity in some reporting laws**
- **Ignorance of the law**
- **Fear of retaliation**
- **Fear reporter's name will be revealed**
– (Kenny 2001; Bailey 1982)



Inadequate training at the heart of problem

- **57% of master's level social workers, pediatricians, physicians, & physicians assistants received less than 10 hours of training on mandated reporting (Delaronde, et. al. 2000)**
- **74% of teachers describe "minimal" or "inadequate" training in college and 58% claim "minimal" or "inadequate" training in the field (Kenny 2001)**
- **24% of reporters received no training; clear correlation between training and reporting. (NIS-4 2010)**



6. Make Everyone in a YSO a mandated reporter



"Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to act is to act."

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer



BSA Mandated Reporting Policies

- **"All persons involved in Scouting must report to local authorities any good faith suspicion or belief that any child is or has been physically or sexually abused, physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material. This duty cannot be delegated to any other person." (emphasis added)**
- **"Immediately notify the Scout Executive of this report, or of any violation of BSA's Youth Protection policies, so he or she may take appropriate action for the safety of our Scouts, make appropriate notifications, and follow-up with investigating agencies."**



7. Faith based YSOs should take a lead in addressing spiritual abuse

In review of 34 studies of 19,090 adult victims of child abuse, the majority had spiritual injuries

(Walker, et al 2009)



Seven horizontal lines for notes.

8. Implement a "no hit zone" in all YSO facilities



Seven horizontal lines for notes.

From Corporal Punishment to Physical Abuse

A majority of substantiated physical abuse cases in U.S. and Canada involved acts of physical discipline. Source: Gershoff, 2008

Parents who use corporal punishment are 3 times as likely to physically abuse a child and 9 times as likely if they use an object. Source: Zolotor, 2011

5% of parents use corporal punishment on infants and up to 70% use CP on children on 2-3 years old. Source: Zolotor, 2011

Seven horizontal lines for notes.

The best that can be said about CP

- “At its worst corporal punishment may have negative effects on children and at its best has no effects, positive or negative.” (Gershoff 2002)
- Think of CP as a “risk factor”



Organizations discouraging CP

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Medical Association
- American College of Emergency Physicians
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
- Academy on Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- Academy on Violence & Abuse (AVA)
- American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC)
- Gundersen Health System



Most YSOs prohibit CP

- A no hit zone would create a conversation with parents as to why any form of hitting can be harmful and offer alternatives
- A no hit zone also applies to children hitting children and adults hitting adults (fits well with bullying policies)
- A no hit zone also educates our volunteers and workers about the impact of any form of violence
- Must be accompanied with training on how to intervene when violence is occurring or threatened



9. Research the children in our YSO



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The MN student survey

- All public school 9th graders were asked about various ACE experiences and characteristics
- What if we asked, in a confidential survey, all of the children in our organizations about possible ACE characteristics (smoking, alcohol or drug use, depression, etc) and asked them if they had endured various types of trauma and by who?
- We would perhaps have concrete data as to the prevalence of abuse among the children we serve, and could better target policies and training.
- Subsequent surveys, in turn, could measure progress

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10. YSOs can build resilience



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What is resilience?

- Resilience has been used to describe behavior, intellect, emotional well-being, social functioning or all of the above (Houshyar, 2005)
- Between a third to half of all individuals who have experienced sexual abuse do not (or at least no longer) exhibit adult psychiatric or psychological problems and can therefore be referred to as 'resilient' (Fergusson & Mullen, 1999; McGloin & Widom, 2001)



Sources of resiliency for abused children

(Summers, 2006)

- Educational characteristics
 - Engagement in academics
 - Engagement in extra-curricular activities
 - Positive relationship with instructors



Other resiliency factors

(Herrenkohl et al, 2008)

- Community characteristics
 - Positive relationship with caring, nonabusive adult
 - Adults or peers who disapprove of antisocial behavior
 - Involvement with religious community
 - Peer support
 - Safety of community
 - Access to health care



Thank you



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