Key Components of Effective Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Programming for Adults

We recognize both the limited research available on the effects of specific programs and the diverse needs and resources in Pennsylvania schools and communities, and therefore have chosen not to promote any one specific professional development or parent/caregiver program. Instead, we recommend the following key components from which each school or district can create an effective and comprehensive professional development and parent/caregiver piece to complement their child sexual abuse prevention program:

- Programs should include varied teaching methods. Prevention programming is best received when the message is delivered using multiple forms of media or presentation, such as role-playing in order to practice skills, video, and discussion (Nation, et al., 2003).
- Programs should include multiple sessions over a period of time to increase knowledge and develop skills for putting knowledge into practice. (Nation, et al., 2003). This could come in the form of a workshop series with a number of sessions on various topics and skills, as well as a follow-up meeting or meetings with participating adults.
- Programs should emphasize positive relationship building and modeling (Nation, et al., 2003).

- Programs should be socioculturally relevant, created by and for the specific community they are engaging, incorporating the cultural norms of that community (Nation, et al., 2003).
- Professional development programs should be delivered by well-trained staff (Nation, et al., 2003) with thorough knowledge on child sexual abuse and knowledge of community resources for both children and adults.
- Programs should include an evaluation component with measurable outcomes (Nation, et al., 2003).
- Although research is limited on the effects of specific curricula, we recommend that schools seek to implement evidence-based programs if possible.

References

Nation, M., Crusto, C., Wandersman, A., Kumpfer, K.L., Seybolt, D., Morrissey-Kane, E., 7 Davino, K. (2003). What works in prevention: Principles of effective prevention programming. American Psychologist, 58, 449-456. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.58.6-7.449