

# Erin's Law



## Tips for Talking with Children Warning Signs Mandated Reporters



# Courage to Talk



Take critical steps to preventing child sexual abuse!

Empower your children to say “no” to unwanted touch and teach them that they can come to you with questions and concerns.

# Steps for Talking to Your Child



- 1) **Explain** that certain parts of their body are private
- 2) Use **proper** names of body parts
- 3) Teach **healthy** touching: handshake, high five, comfortable hug, etc.
- 4) **Teach** children that they are not to touch other children's private areas
- 5) Explain that if something makes them **uncomfortable** they have to tell the person to "stop"
- 6) **Help** children identify a "safe" adults to talk to
- 7) Do not put all of this information into one big talk

# Be Involved



- Be engaged in your child's activities
- Know the other adults your child might interact with
- Talk about media and technology
- Spend time with your child
- Remind your child that he/she can come to you



# Help Build Their Self-Esteem



**Low self-esteem is a pivotal factor in risky teen behavior.**

- Encourage your teen to get involved in a hobby, work, sport, art, etc.
- Teach your teen how to take care of him/herself
- Empower your teen to be in control of his/her life
- Give your teen responsibility
- Communicate how much you value his/her independence, accomplishments, and ability to be responsible



# Suspecting Abuse



- Changes in behavior
- Withdrawal from family/friends
- Non interest with activities they used to enjoy
- Physical warning signs



# Physical Warning Signs



- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bleeding, bruises, or swelling in genital area
  - Pain, itching or burning in genital area
  - Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Severe gag reflex, even with nothing in or near mouth
  - Frequent or chronic severe nausea
  - Chronic, unexplained pelvic pain



# Warning Signs- Behavior



- Inappropriate sexual knowledge
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Nightmares or bed wetting
- Emotional outburst
- Displays of anger and rage
- Extreme startle-response when touched or a certain person enters the room
- Suddenly doesn't want to be around a certain person
- Large weight fluctuations or changes in appetite
- Suicide attempts
- Feelings of worthlessness and or lack of self-respect
- Suicidal ideation
- Self-harming
- Runs away
- Sudden changes in school performance, grades or drops out
- Overly protective and concerned for siblings, assuming a caretaker role
- Criminal activity
- Fear of extreme loss of control; extreme need to feel in control
- Extreme sensitivity and or irritability
- Lack of confidence



# Disclosure



## What can you do?

- Provide a safe environment (private, listen...)
  - Believe them, care about them
  - Avoid leading questions
- Reassure child/student that sharing is the right thing to do
  - Their safety is priority
  - Determine next steps

# Mandated Reporters



- Mandated Reporters- people who have regular contact with vulnerable people and are therefore legally required to ensure a report is made when abuse is observed or suspected.
- Their responsibility is to:
  - 1-800-25-ABUSE (follow up with appropriate paperwork)
  - The person the child informed must make the phone call
  - Use the child's language/repeat what they told you
  - The child should not be asked to tell again