



Community Based Prevention

The statistics are shocking. Retrospective studies indicate that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys were sexually abused before their 18th birthday. The problem is far and wide. Turn on the news or pick up a newspaper and chances are you will find a horrific story of child sexual abuse right in your own community. We are left feeling fearful and powerless. But, we can move from outrage into action. Prevention is the answer.



One of the most proactive and pragmatic approaches to diminishing child sexual abuse is the education of responsible adults. Imagine a community where adults are actively working together to change a cultural norm – from one where child sexual abuse is shrouded in fear and denial and children are easy targets to one where every child is better protected throughout the community. Now is the time for our communities to be intentional and steadfast in their protective behaviors, so that all children can grow up healthy and whole.

STARTING A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Darkness to Light's Prevent Now! Workshop teaches individuals and organizations how to implement a child sexual abuse prevention initiative in their community. The workshop provides a set of tools and best practices that will increase awareness, training and financial support for a sustainable community initiative.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

A successful initiative has increased awareness, sustainable funding, and ongoing education. Although initiatives vary greatly from community to community, successful initiatives typically include:

- A lead organization spearheading the prevention initiative.
- A full time paid prevention specialist at the lead organization dedicated to the success of the effort.
- A community coalition of professionals and other committed individuals who "make it happen."
- Darkness to Light's *Stewards of Children*® training program and a network of facilitators who carry out the training.
- An exciting and inspiring goal that can engage and motivate the community.
- Funding necessary to carry out and sustain the initiative.
- Public awareness programs including media and other special events such as *Prevent-a-Thon*.





HOW MANY ADULTS SHOULD BE TRAINED?

A goal provides a clear picture of what is to be accomplished. It shows that you are serious and committed to the initiative and will help engage, motivate and energize the community. We suggest an initial goal of training 5% of the adult population in a community. This 5% represents the “tipping point,” or the point at which momentum is unstoppable, and a cultural shift can occur.

WHO SHOULD BE TRAINED?

For the broadest impact, all geographical areas and demographic groups as well as all types of youth serving and other civic and community organizations should be given the opportunity to participate in the prevention training. In general, focus will be on the five core groups:

- Schools (K-12 and Higher-Ed, public and private)
- Parents and caregivers
- Faith centers
- Youth serving organizations
- Youth sports organizations

WHAT ARE THE TOOLS AVAILABLE?

Stewards of Children: The primary program used in a community-based initiative, *Stewards of Children*, is an evidence-based 2.5 hour training for adults, led by an authorized facilitator.

Prevent Now! Community Awareness Meeting: A one and half hour meeting used to bring individuals from the community together to hear about the problem of child sexual abuse and its human and economic impact.

Media: An important component in generating community awareness, media can include paid ads or donated air time and press. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) can also help engage a community around prevention.

Prevent-a-thon: A month-long community-based, media-driven event that helps increase awareness and provides free prevention education and training to the public.

WHAT DOES A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE COST?

Costs depend on the community’s defined goal. A sustainable funding strategy draws from multiple sources including individual donors, grants, corporate sponsors, foundation gifts, etc.

Join the movement to end childhood sexual abuse:

To act now or find out more about our programs, please call 843.965.5444 or email stewards@D2L.org www.D2L.org.