Definition of Child Sexual Abuse

What is Child Sexual Abuse?
- According to Stop it Now, "All sexual activity between an adult and a child is sexual abuse"
- Non-contact sexual abuse includes:
  o Photographing or videotaping a child in sexual poses
  o Encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
  o Inappropriately watching a child undress or use the bathroom
  o Texting, instant messaging (IMing) or emailing sexually explicit messages to a child
- Sexually abusive physical contact or touching includes:
  o Touching a child's private parts for sexual purposes
  o Making a child touch someone else's genitals or play sexual games
  o Contact of objects or body parts with a child in a sexual manner for sexual gratification

What is Non-Sexual Abuse of Neglect?
- Any intentional act by an adult or by another child that harms or threatens to harm a child's physical, mental, or emotional health
- Abuse by another child can be an older or stronger individual who exerts his or her position of power
- Neglect is another form of abuse that occurs when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs
- Emotional abuse can occur when words or actions are used that cause extreme emotional pain

Some Facts about Child Sexual Abuse
- Every year in this country, two million children are brutally beaten or sexually abused
- The U.S. Department of Justice estimates there are two hundred and fifty thousand to five hundred thousand pedophiles or child molesters in the United States
- A nationwide study reported that sixty-six percent of children did not tell of sexual abuse from an adult until they were an adult themselves
- Convicted child molesters abusing girls have an average of fifty-two victims before they are subject to criminal prosecution and conviction
- Men who molest boys have an average of one hundred and fifty victims before criminal prosecution and conviction
- Approximately thirty one percent of women in prison were sexually abused as children
- Nearly ninety five percent of teenage prostitutes have been sexually abused
- Adolescents with a history of sexual abuse are much more likely than their peers to engage in promiscuous sexual behavior

- Young girls who are sexually abused are three times more likely than others to have psychiatric disorders or have substance abuse problems in adulthood
- Sexual abuse greatly increases the risk of eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia

Who are the Victims and Perpetrators?
- It is widely accepted that the vast majority of child sexual abusers are male
- Many perpetrators act as intensely interested in child welfare
- Male abusers outnumber female eight to one
- Victims can develop a variety of distressing signs

What Causes Child Sexual Abuse?
- Perpetrators know the traits of children of whom they can take advantage
- They count on children being unwilling to report abuse
- Abusers are present in every social class, race and vocation

Classes of Child Molesters
- Pedophiles – looking for sexual gratification
- Aggressors – looking to dominate the victim
- Pornographers – looking to make a profit and experience sexual thrill
- All classes are viewed by law enforcement and the community as particularly dangerous criminals

Why is the Number of Reported Cases So Low?
- Most prosecutions are based on reports from the victims
- Children are afraid to report sexual abuse
  - Fear they may not be believed
  - Fear they may be blamed
  - May feel some responsibility or guilt
  - The predator may have told the victim they are guilty
- Some victims may sympathize with their abuser, a form of "Stockholm Syndrome"

Should Children be Warned?
- According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "Yes"
- Spelled out in their literature, *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures*
- "Your organization needs to provide youth with some basic child sexual abuse information"