THE SEXUAL CLIMATE OF A SCHOOL: IMPACT ON SEXUAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND EDUCATION

Dr. Janet Rosenzweig Author, The Sex-Wise Parent National Consultant for Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs, Prevent Child Abuse America

A presentation prepared for

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND HEALTH SERVICES

PASSAIC BOARD OF EDUCATION

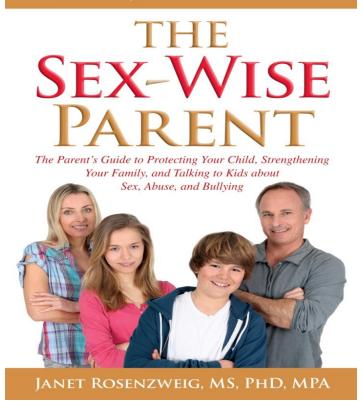
February 28, 2013

EXPERIENCE WORKING IN CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

- First Child Sexual Abuse Helpline in the US, 1978
- Directed 5 federally funded programs in East Tenn.
- Started first County Commission on Child Abuse in NJ, 1985, Mercer County
- Member, Protection Subcommittee of the NJ Task Force on Child Abuse, 1987-2007
- Executive Director, Prevent Child Abuse NJ, 2001-2007
- National Consultant for Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs, Prevent Child Abuse America (current)

AUTHOR:

"Dr. Rosenzweig's work will reduce trauma, save lives, and help families." —James Hmurovich, president and CEO, Prevent Child Abuse America



Because I believe that PARENTS must be equipped to promote the sexual health and safety of their children!

OBJECTIVES *

- Participants will learn how the research of school climate can be applied to promoting a healthy sexual climate in a school
- Participants will identify actions they can take to help maintain a healthy sexual climate in their school
- Participants will learn the legal aspects of sexual acting out

* as specified for the CEU application



- A healthy sexual climate promotes the physical and emotional safety of students and school personnel.
- A healthy sexual climate supports appropriate integration of sexual issues into curricula for health, art, history, science and related areas.

WHAT IS SEXUAL CLIMATE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Part 1

SEXUAL CLIMATE/SEXUAL CULTURE

 Terms borrowed from researchers/scholars in education

Extensive research on the impact of school climate on discipline, performance, achievement, staff turnover and other issues; see for example Tableman, Betty and Adrienne Herron. "<u>School Climate and</u> <u>Learning." Best Practice Briefs, Number 31 University-Community</u> Partnerships @Michigan State University: 2004

- "Culture" refers to the written rules, regulations and policies that specify how an organization operates
- "Climate" refers to how it actually feels to be in a building

SCHOOL CLIMATE CAN BE A DIFFICULT CONCEPT TO GRASP

- Because most adults have spent time in very few schools!
- Those of you who work in multiple schools can attest to the fact that 2 schools in the same district, with the same formal culture can 'feel' entirely different.
- Climate is specific to an individual school highly dependent on the PEOPLE

SEXUAL CLIMATE

- Refers to how a group or organization actually deals with sexual issues
- Language and terminology
- Privacy
- Respect
- Boundaries
- Dress Code
- Graffiti
- Others?

SEXUAL CLIMATE IN SCHOOLS

- At least 5% of kids report sexual contact with a school employee sometime during their school years
- With young kids, we're concerned with pedophiles.
- By middle and high school we're concerned with adults who exploit their power and status to seduce kids.

THE SHAKESHAFT REPORT

 Shakeshaft, Carol. Educator Sexual Misconduct: A Synthesis of Existing Literature. Washington, D,C.: U.S.
 Department of Education, Office of the Undersecretary, 2004.

> Access the report,
> Educator Sexual Misconduct here.

IN NEW JERSEY.....

 The Institutional Abuse investigation Unit of the NJ Department of Children and Families (DCF) receives more than 10,000 cases to investigate each year, alleging abuse in institutions of all types, including schools and child care centers

EXAMPLES OF BAD SEXUAL CLIMATE

• Bergen Record Story, January 2012

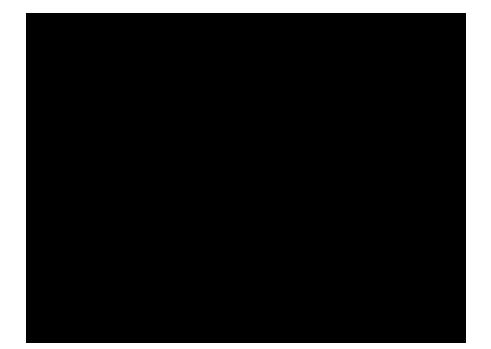
 Statewide, nearly a dozen teachers or coaches have made headlines {in the past 2 months} accused of everything from videotaping boys showering in a school locker room to having sex with teens they were chaperoning on a field trip.

GOOD POLICIES (CULTURE)!

• a spokesman for the New Jersey School Boards Association, estimates that 15 to 20 percent of districts now have policies that prohibit teachers from "friending" students on networks. The policies also ban teachers from giving out private cell or home numbers without district approval. All "e-contacts" with students must be made through school computer and telephone systems and communication between coaches and players should be sent to all members of a team.

EXAMPLE OF A SCHOOL CLIMATE

● <u>HBO special</u> on you tube



THIS WAS NOT A SECRET!

- People knew that this teacher routinely made sexual advances towards students.
- In some schools, faculty or staff would be punished for no more than an off-color remark to a student; in other schools men like Andy Bleiler (who was barely 30 at the time!) operate in the open.

The DIFFERENCE IS THE SEXUAL CLIMATE!

SUPERINTENDENT REMOVES ENTIRE STAFF OF A SCHOOL AFTER INCIDENT REPORTED

- Deasy: "We intend to interview every adult, every adult who works at that school, whether they are a teacher or administrator, or whether they are an after-school playground worker or a custodian or a secretary. I mean every single solitary adult who works at Miramonte."
- This man understands the power of school climate!

ANDY HAS A LOT OF COMPANY

 I have yet to speak to a group where at least one person recalls their school experience including a teacher sexually involved in some way with a student

 Educator Sexual Misconduct: A Synthesis of Existing Literature

READ THIS REPORT!

BEYOND PEDOPHILIA

• Hebephile: someone with a preference for children just entering puberty

• Ephebophile: someone with an attraction to older adolescents.

BOTH GENDERS A

- Brittni Colleps, a Texas school teacher charged with having sex with four students at her home, 2012
- Mary Kay Letourneau, the school teacher jailed for having sexual relations with her 13-year-old student, 1996

SCHOOL CLIMATE

• Great article about school climate here

- There is a lot of research on the overall school climate and its impact on everything from student behavior to student achievement.
- These same concepts MUST be applied to issues around sexuality

GROUP EXERCISE

- Institutional Norms Exercise For agencies serving young children
- The following questions can be used to start discussions among staff in child serving institutions as a tool for management to communicate the policies and procedures in place to promote appropriate boundaries. These answers will change with the age of the children being served, the formality of the institution and the experience of the staff.
- Detail on these and related topics can be found in The Sex-Wise Parent, (Skyhorse, 2012) Chapter 6.
- What terms will we use with kids about all body parts? How and when will you use them?
- *Discussion point*: Children need words for genitalia easily understood by others.
- Will we have a dress code for both staff and students?
- *Discussion point*: Privacy, modesty, self-respect

ASSESSING SEXUAL CLIMATE IN A SCHOOL

- Is the school's physical environment welcoming and conducive to learning?
- What are the school's policies and <u>track record</u> around bullying and sexual harassment?
 - Key conceptual link between bullying and sexual abuse: lack of regard for the impact the behavior has on the victim. Sadly, lack of empathy is developmentally normal during adolescence.

IMPORTANT DETAIL ...

 Does the policy provide for sanctions for failing to comply? Is anyone monitoring?

The difference between culture and climate.... Just because there's a rule that something has to be done (culture) is no guarantee that it will be done the same way throughout an organization or school district!

SEXUAL CLIMATE

- What is the school's policy and track record regarding teacher-student contact?
 - Are student allowed to address faculty and staff by first names?
 - Are there clear rules for both actual and virtual out of school contact between student and faculty/staff? Are there meaningful consequences for breaking the rules? Are they enforced?

SEXUAL CLIMATE

• What is the policy on dress code and how is it enforced?

Butt cleavage, breast cleavage, midriffs and suggestive slogans on clothing are not conducive to learning. It is perfectly natural for kids to push boundaries and show up to school wearing something that bends -- if not actually breaks -- the rules. School staff should react firmly and without embarrassing or humiliating the student.

"FIRST RESPONDER"

Think before responding

- Contiguity of stimuli"
- Above all, do no harm
- Face your own feelings about sexuality and work on keeping a 'game face', especially with younger kids
- Avoid shaming kids in consensual play or selfcomforting

● If possible, determine in the act was consensual

 This only applies to kids with kids --- It is NEVER consensual if it's a child and adult - Joe Del Russo will cover this!

RESPONDING TO SEXUAL ACTING OUT

Confront peers you suspect of crossing boundaries

That's how YOU set the sexual climate - by not tolerating questionable behaviors

BOUNDARIES:

Can be....

- Physical (physical proximity, who can be alone with whom)
- Emotional (e.g. certain feelings aren't shared)
- Social (what we do together)
- Virtual (on-line communication and relationships)

EXPLAINING BOUNDARIES TO KIDS

Concepts:

- Privacy: We know what's going on, but don't have to see it
- Secrecy: We don't know what's going on

JOE DEL RUSSO

Chief Assistant Passaic County Prosecutor Joseph A. Del Russo - Special Victims Unit

8 CHILD ABUSE MYTHS

• How it really works...

Joseph A. Del Russo Chief Assistant Prosecutor Passaic County Prosecutor's Special Victims Unit Totowa, NJ 07512 jdelrusso@passaiccountynj.org

- * Sex Offenders are Typically Unemployed and Uneducated
- Its a Crime if 40 Year Old Police Officer has Intercourse with a 16 yo Junior High Student
- * Doctors Can Tell If a Child is Sexually Abused
- * Kids Who are Sexually Abused Typically Tell Someone
- * If a Child Says They Lied About Abuse Charges Are Dropped
- * Aggressive Police Interrogation Gets Suspects To Confess
- * Megan's Law Puts Sex Offenders On The Internet
- * Megan's Law Permits The Police To Notify The Community

MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTING FOR EDUCATORS AND INSTITUTIONS

Chief Assistant Passaic County Prosecutor Joseph A. Del Russo - Special Victims Unit

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Difficult Decision
- Staff Struggle with Whether it Should be Reported
- They Want to do the Right Thing
- Seems Simple Enough
 - Counter Intuitive
- The Lesson of this Video is Rather Straightforward
- Started in the Field Early 90s
- Why Not Make a Video (2007)
- Why Not Put It On-Line (2012)
- screen shots follow...



Basic Child Abuse Course Registration

1	1. Create an account / 2. Watch Video / 3. Take Intro text placed here. This type is for layout purposes only; it is not demonstrate the size, style and length that will be evident in the finite	t really intended to be read for content. The main intention here is to
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	Password:	Confirm Password:
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	Grade Taought:	
4	> NEXT STEP	

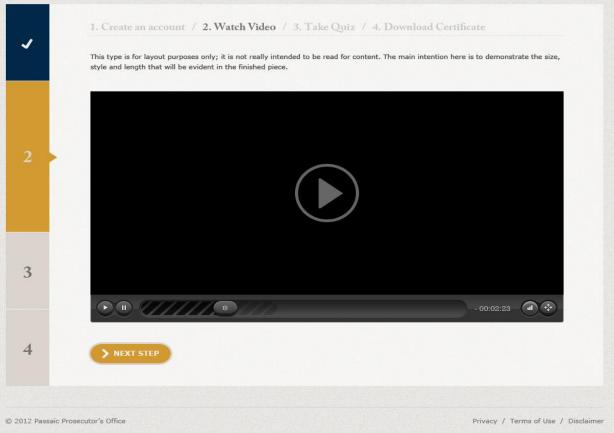
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Basic Child Abuse Course Watch Video



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POST-VIDEO EVALUATION



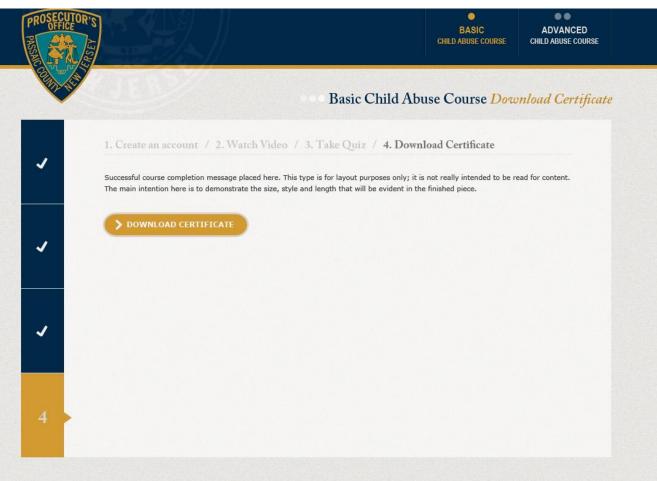
BASIC
CHILD ABUSE COURSE

ADVANCED CHILD ABUSE COURSE

Basic Child Abuse Course Take Quiz

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 a. Your immediate supervisor 	🔿 c. The child's parents
• b. DYFS	 d. All of the above
	I reassure the child that he or she was right to disclose the abuse.
2. True or False: If appropriate, comfort and	

DOWNLOAD CERTIFICATE



CERTIFICATE

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	Presented by	
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ADVANCED TRAINING

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ADVANCED CERTIFICATE

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SPANISH LANGUAGE RESOURCES

http://www.nsvrc.org/es/saam

• <u>http://nsvrc.org/publications/en-espanol</u>

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center

FOR MORE INFORMATION,

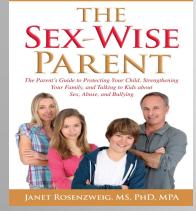
Or a copy of this slide set

•www.sexwiseparent.com/resources

- Look for 'slides from Passaic Schools presentation'
- All links will be live to the items referenced in this presentation

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

For working to promote a healthy sexual climate in Passaic Schools!



Dr. Janet Rosenzweig www.SexWiseParent.com