



## **Suggestions for Providing Abuse Prevention Training to Staff and Volunteers**

There are many ways to provide information and teach skills to individuals. Delivery mechanisms, level of interactivity, frequency, and training methods all need to be considered when designing training or an education program.

### **Delivery mechanisms:**

Delivery mechanisms can use a great deal of technology or none at all. Training messages, numbers of trainees, resources, flexibility, and integration with other training within the organization should be considered when choosing a delivery mechanism. Be sensitive to dealing with the emotional topic of child sexual abuse in impersonal formats (e.g., online, videos, CDs).

- Online - interaction is key to making sure that people learn the material, so using interactive online techniques may work better than passive ones.
- Videos/CDs
- In person
- Written
- Combinations of delivery mechanisms (e.g., some online, some in person)

### **Interactivity:**

Training can be passive, interactive, or somewhere in between. Passive training, in which trainees do not interact with anyone else (e.g., video), can be effective for raising awareness, before other forms of training and/or refreshing previous training. Interactive training, in which trainees interact with the trainer (or system) and/or other trainees, is best for skills building and group discussions.

### **Frequency:**

When it comes to many topics, once is not enough. Your organization should train during the hiring (on-boarding) process and reinforce the content training with regular discussions and at least annually with refresher training. Training can be conducted in both formal training sessions and in informal settings, such as directed conversations with supervisors and other staff.

## Methods

Using several methods to train individuals reinforces messages and allows individuals with different learning styles to absorb information and skills. Some effective methods include:

- Presenting case studies to elicit discussion and suggestions for handling situations and walking through problem-solving
- Asking people to role play situations
- The use of journaling
- Recruiting outside professionals conduct training; which may emphasize importance

## Mechanisms to Ensure Training

Training can be expensive and time-consuming, mechanisms must be in place to ensure that training is conducted and documented.

Organizations should develop a regular training schedule or repeat trainings when a specified number of new employees/volunteers have been added. Training can be integrated into the overall child abuse prevention policy and into some staff member's work plans. Other ideas include:

- Probationary periods for staff until training is completed
- All staff trained prior to starting their duties
- Requiring periodic certification based on training completion
- Networking with a group of similar organizations to develop and implement training
- Partnering with other organizations, including child advocacy centers, sexual violence coalitions, and universities to deliver training regularly
- Enrolling in online training and tracking systems

Some information has been adapted from [Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations](#) from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other sources.

More information about youth protection is available from the [Online Resource Library](#).