




Dynamics of Child Sexual Abuse



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Protecting children, healing lives.

Kaiser Permanente
OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital
Providence Children's Health
Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel

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Purpose

- ✓ Define Child Sexual Abuse
- ✓ Understand the unique dynamics of Child Sexual Abuse, particularly in regards to the interplay of brain development, power differences, and emotional boundary manipulation/gaslighting, and how children make sense of the abuse
- ✓ Understand more about why it happens and who does it
- ✓ Learn about CARES Northwest's messaging about Mandatory Reporting

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Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse

Any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer.

May involve physical contact such as touching or kissing.

May involve child/teen being exposed to offender's sexual behavior or body.

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

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Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves a child or teen being engaged in sexual activities that they do not understand or comprehend, which they are not developmentally prepared for and cannot give consent, and/or violates law or social taboo.

Sexual exploitation is using a child or teen in sexual activity for personal gain, such as trafficking or pornography production.

American Academy of Pediatrics

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Child Sexual Abuse by the Number

ACEs: 1 in 4 women reported being abused as a child
1 in 6 men reported being abused as a child

Oregon 2015: 1:5 & 1:12

34% Younger than 9

90% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child knows and trusts

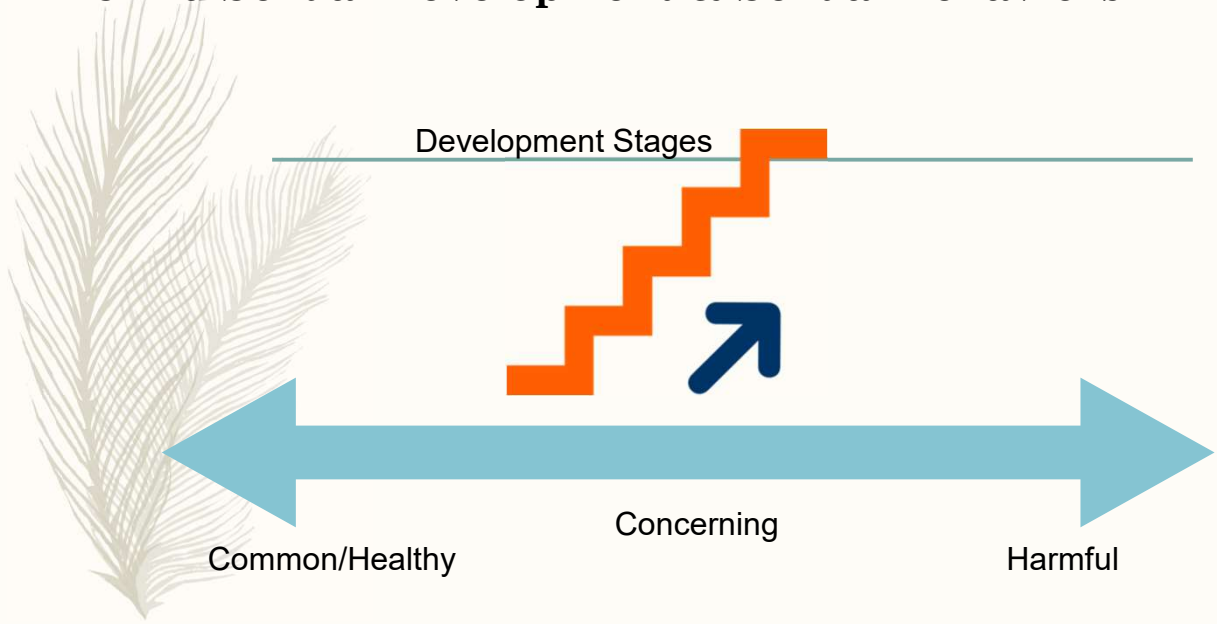
Family member:

Kids < 6: 50%

Youth 12-17 = 12%

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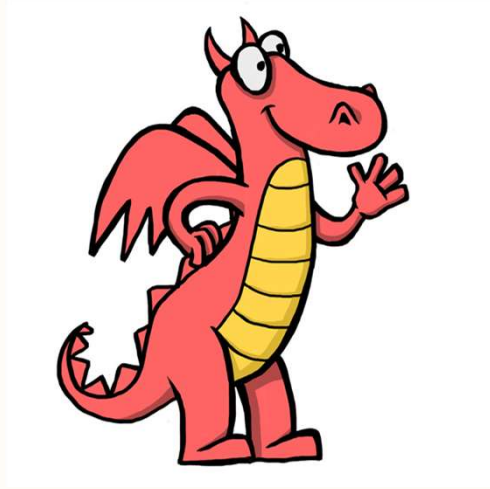
Child Sexual Development & Sexual Behaviors



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Common Messaging About Child Sexual Abuse

- Kids should reduce their vulnerability
- Kids should recognize it
- Kids should stop it
- Kids should tell about it



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Barriers to This Type of Prevention

A lot of times its people they trust/care for so they don't want them in trouble

Family not believing them

Feelings of guilt if the tell someone that the person harming them will be hurt or they won't see them anymore

Kids are afraid of losing their loved ones.

Embarrassed if others find out

Being scared they will get in trouble

fear of retaliation and non support from the adults being told

No one will believe me

Shame and guilt around not disclosing, may feel stupid or ironic with how "easy" it is seems when presented traditionally

I don't want my family member to get arrested

Feeling that they are unclean and it was their fault

Being afraid of hurting a loved one

Not believing them

Freezing is a real trauma response.

The repercussions - court, therapy, rumors.

fear, embarrassment, don't think they will be believed, fear of someone being mad at them

Often times isn't a stranger that is abusing, so very often family or power dynamics are at play

Not sure what just happened to them

Awkward

Kids being afraid to tell - ruining family dynamics. Threatened by the abuser.

I'm too scared

Abuser might be who they would want to report to.

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Females

BI-POC

Sexual violence but it does not

Oppression
Racism

to anyone,
everyone equally.

LGBTQ+

People with Disabilities

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Sexual Assault:
Non-Consensual sexual contact. Often used when discussing behaviors that occur between adults and adults; or teens and teens. It often happens once. Often includes some type of violence, manipulation or some type of incapacitation. Can happen between people that know each other well, intimate partners, people who just met, or strangers.

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Sexual Harassment:

A pattern of unwanted sexual behavior towards someone. Often it includes sexual talk. May include sexual actions (sexual touching or gestures). Often the people are similar in age (adults to adults, or teens to teens). Often describes behaviors that happen in workplaces or schools. Rarely includes violence but may include threats or implied rewards. The person doing the harassing has higher status than the one being harassed.

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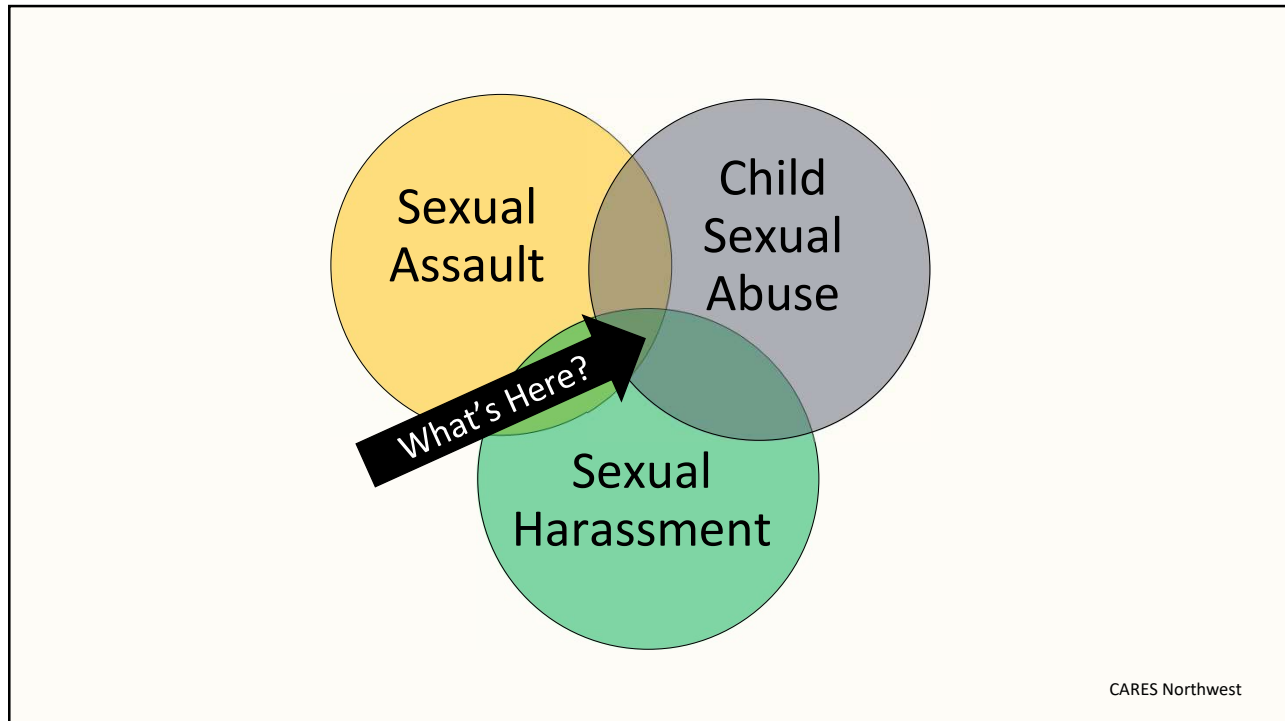
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Child Sexual Abuse: Sexual Contact and between people and at least one them is under 18. Almost always happens more than once and gets worse over time.

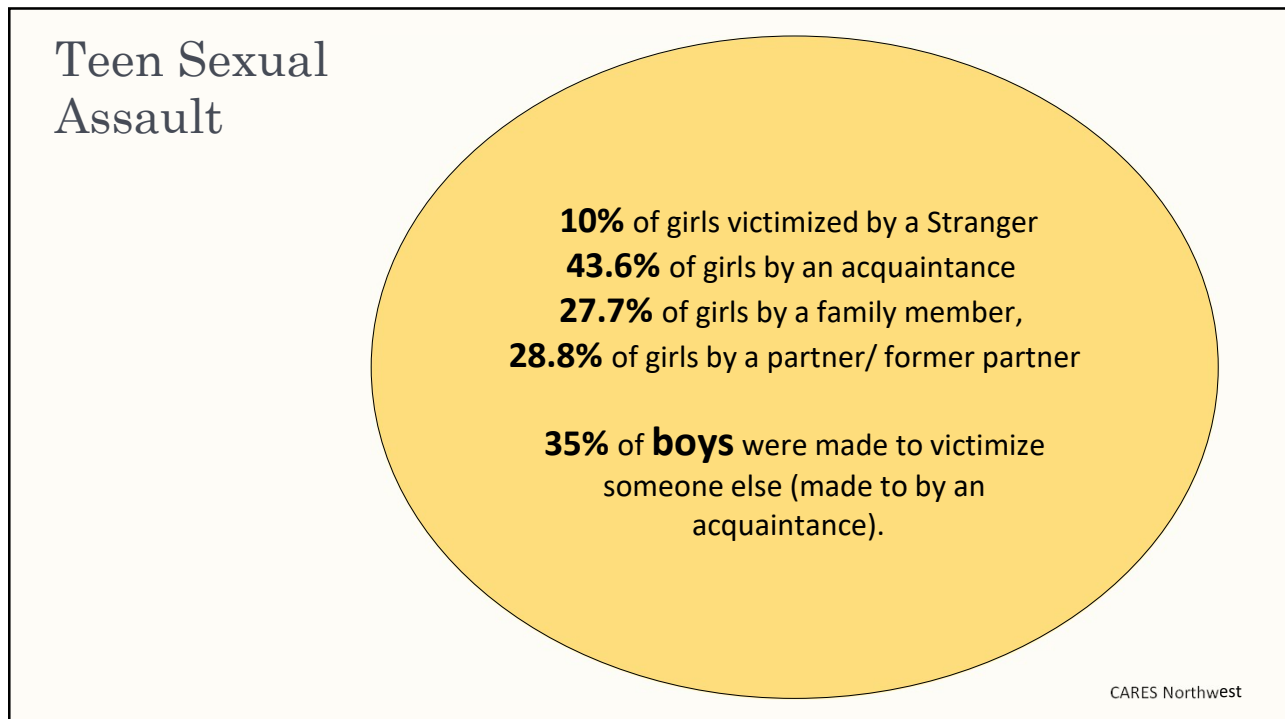
Rarely includes violence, and rarely includes threats. Often includes giving the younger person special things, or more attention than others. Doesn't always include sexual touching. One person has more power than the other. Consent is not possible.

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Child Sexual Abuse Dynamics:

- ❖ How do people relate to kids when they have intent to sexually abuse them?
- ❖ How does the nature of the relationship and the type of manipulation affect the child?
- ❖ How do kids perceive the sexual abuse
- ❖ Why do people sexually abuse children?

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What's Consent got to do with it?

Is consent possible when child sexual abuse happens?

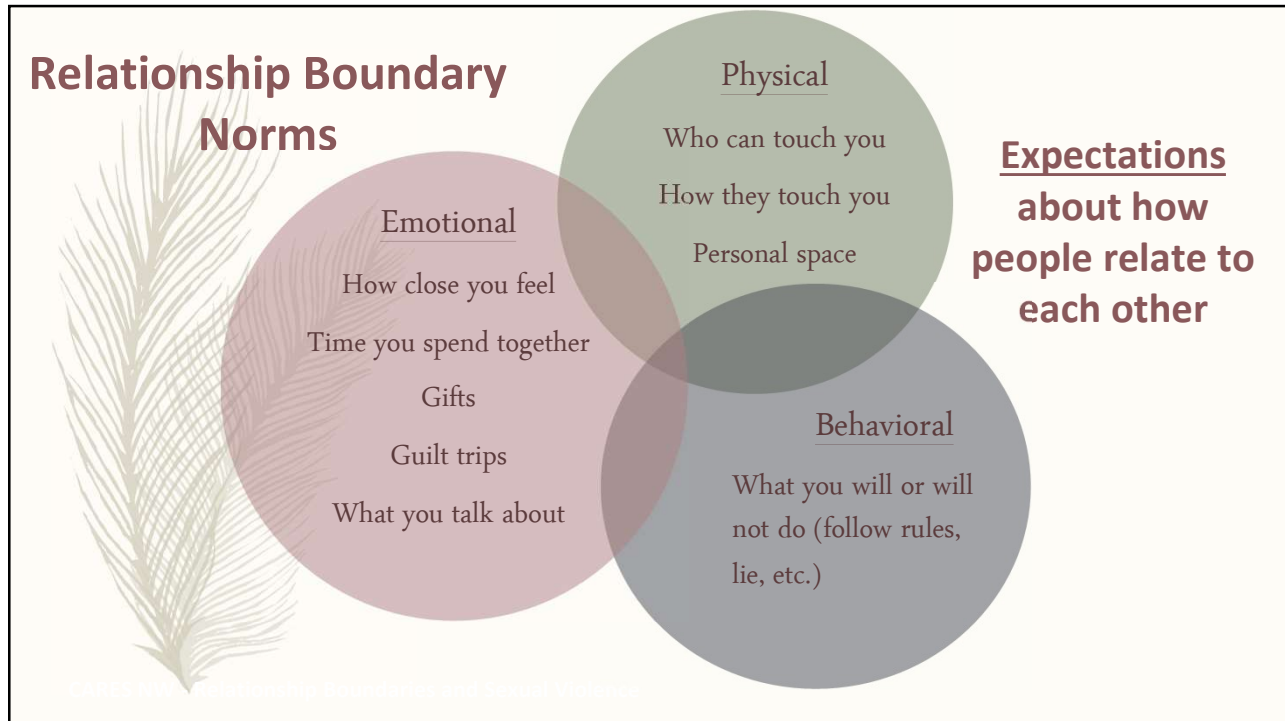
Why?

Why Not?

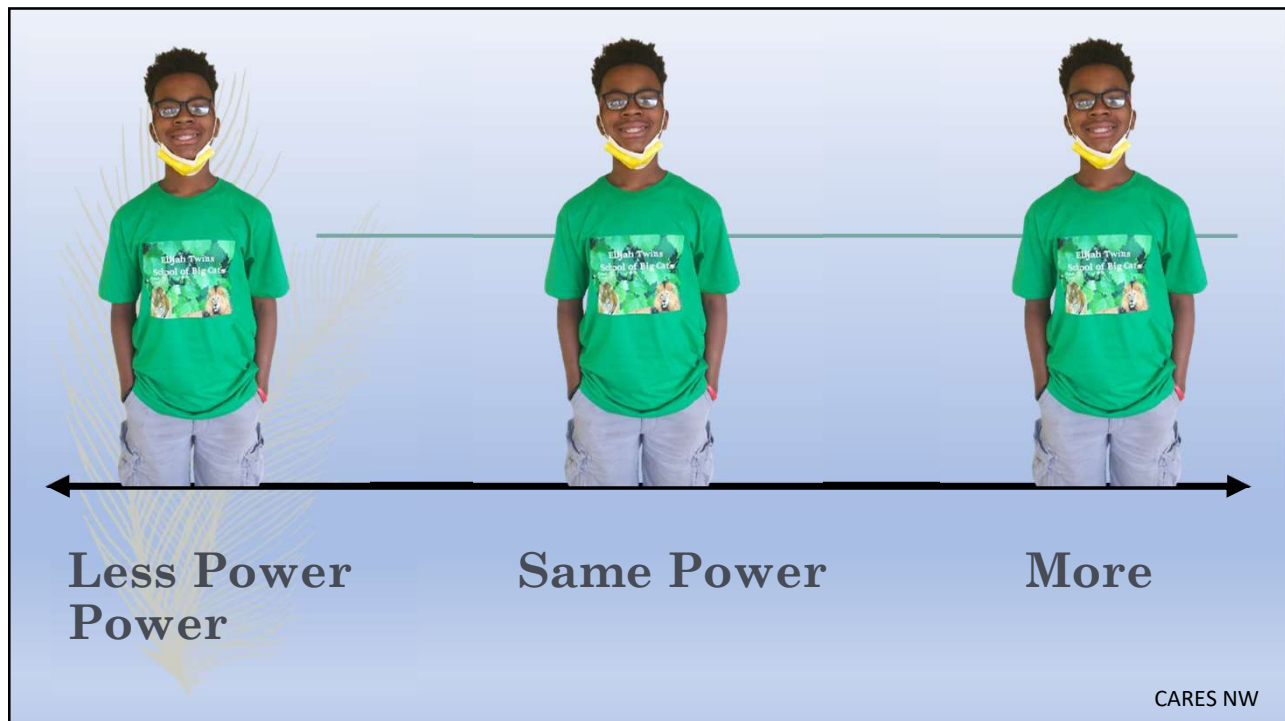
Does your answer change if the younger person is 3, 10, or 16? If so, why?



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How Sexual Abuse Affects Youth

Things to consider

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How Sexual Abuse Affects People

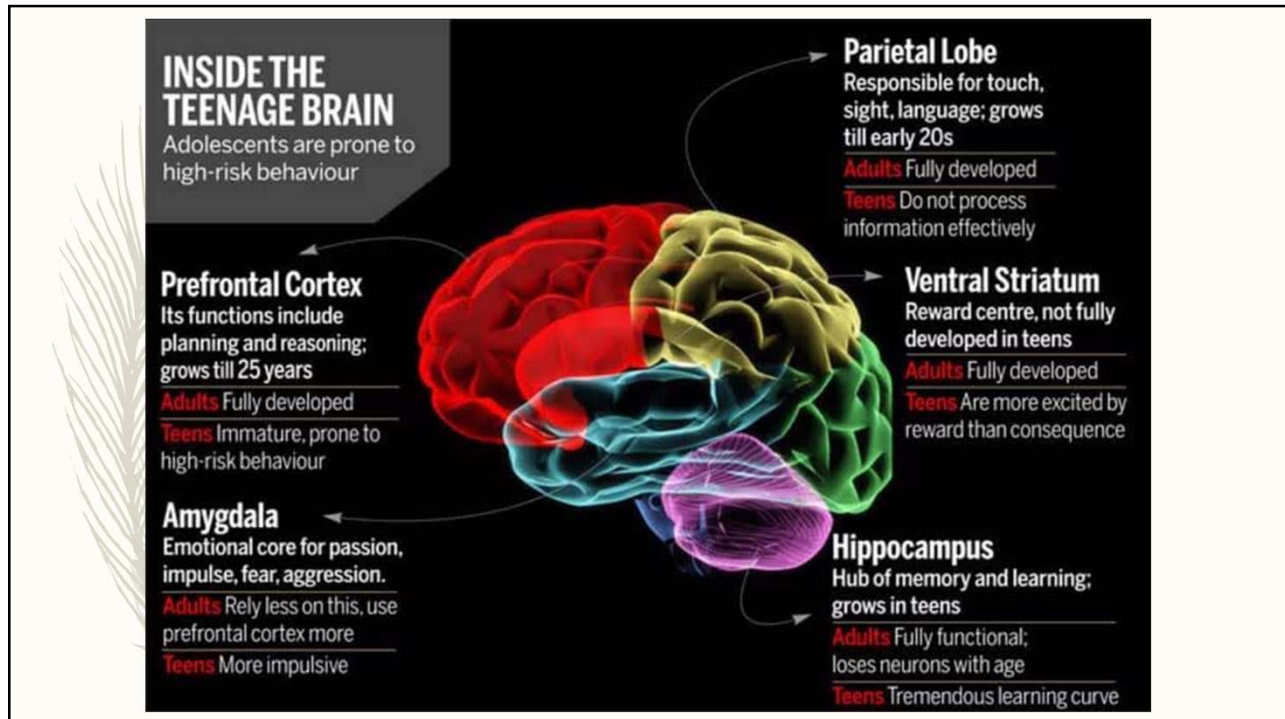
A Developmental Perspective

- 0-8: The Unaware Child
- 8-11: Prepubescent
- The Adolescent
- The Adult

Just Before Dawn, Jan Hindman Incest and Sexuality
Wendy Maltz & Beverly Holman

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Age ain't nothing but a number
 Throwing down ain't nothing but a thing
 This something I have for you it'll never change
 Take my hand, and come with me
 Let me show you to ecstasy
 Boy be brave don't be afraid
 Cause tonight we're gonna go all the way
 Don't mean to be bold, gotta let you know
 I gotta thing for you, and I can't let go
 My age ain't nothing but a number

A child can't agree to sexual activity.
 Consent is not present.
 The older person knows they are breaking the rules.

CARES NW - Power in Relationships, Sexual Violence, Personal Power

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Child Sexual Abuse Dynamics: Why do people sexually abuse children?

There is no simple reason for why someone misuses a position of power or influence to be sexual with a child.

The answers are not only complex, but as different as the people and situations involved.

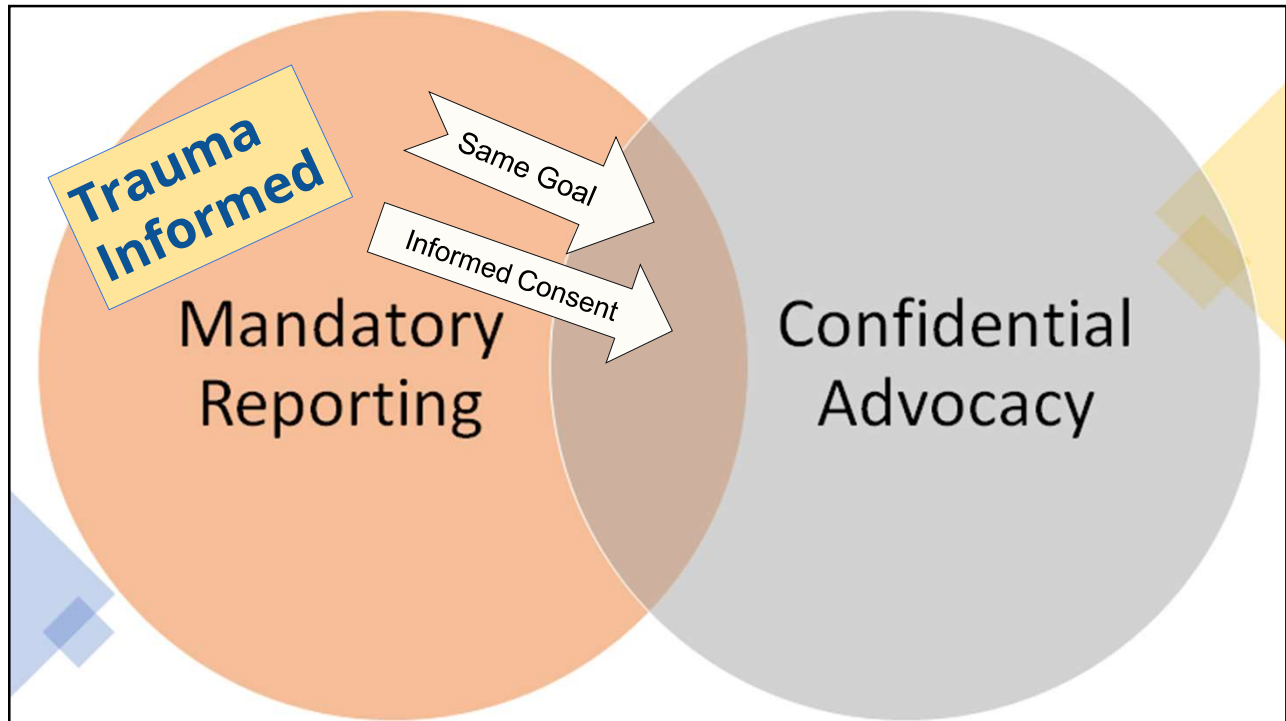
- Person with power or influence over a child develops a sexual interest in the child.
- The internal and external barriers or “stops” that would otherwise prevent them from betraying the child’s trust are overcome.
- The person acts on their sexual fantasies and impulses toward the child.

From 1:6 – www.1in6.org
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