

Stewards of Children USA



Type of intervention



Online/App



Group Work

Target group/s, level/s of prevention and sub-group/s:



Primary prevention

Young Adults (18-20 Years), Adults (21 Years +) | Male & Female | Online/App, Group Work | English, Spanish

Target population

Parents, youth serving organisations, educational institutions, schools, worship centres, recreation facilities, day care centres and other youth organisations.

Delivery organisation

Darkness to Light, a non-profit organisation with a mission to reduce the incidence of child sexual abuse through public awareness and education. It is an international organisation, with an office based in the USA.

Mode and context of delivery

The Stewards of Children child sexual abuse prevention training programme is available in English, Spanish and Canadian English and can be done either online or in a group setting led by an authorised facilitator.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

The group-setting Stewards of Children programme is led by a Darkness to Light authorised facilitator, who will have received seven hours of instruction in a facilitator workshop. The online version of the programme allows any concerned adult who wants to help better protect children to take part at any time or place, at a pace of their choosing.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

Facilitator-led training typically takes about two hours. The online version is also a two hour training session but does not have to be completed in one sitting, i.e. you can pause anywhere in the programme and pick it up later without losing your place.

Description of intervention

Stewards of Children is a child sexual abuse prevention training programme that teaches adults how to prevent, recognise and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. It is a two part DVD presentation integrating commentary from sexual abuse survivors, experts in the field and other concerned adults, all providing practical guidance for preventing and responding to child sexual abuse. It is an evidence-informed prevention program that shows administrators, staff and volunteers how to implement effective prevention policies, recognise the signs of sexual abuse in children and react responsibly if abuse occurs.

Stewards of Children was developed to meet the needs of a variety of organisations. Training addresses:

- prevalence and consequences of child sexual abuse for communities and organisations
- minimising opportunity by reducing isolated one-on-one situations
- practical strategies for protecting children from sexual abuse
- talk about it: age-appropriate, open conversations about our bodies, sex, and boundaries; how to help children talk about these issues
- behaviours and grooming techniques practiced by perpetrators; how to recognise the signs of abuse
- how to intervene and react responsibly if warning signs appear or abuse is discovered

Desired outcomes:

- increased awareness of the prevalence, consequences and circumstances of child sexual abuse
- new skills for adults to prevent, recognise and react responsibly to child sexual abuse
- proactive, positive change to organisational policies and procedures
- individual commitment to action via a personal prevention plan

Evaluation

Rheingold, A. A., Zajac, K., Chapman, J. E., Patton, M., de Arellano, M., Saunders, B., & Kilpatrick, D. (2014). Child sexual abuse prevention training for childcare professionals: An independent multi-site randomized controlled trial of Stewards of Children. *Prevention Science*, doi 10.1007/s11121-014-0499-6

This evaluation collated responses from 352 childcare professionals across three American states. Professionals were assigned, randomly, to one of three conditions:

- in-person training
- web-based training or
- waiting list control group

Questionnaires were used to assess child sexual abuse knowledge, child sexual abuse attitudes and self-reported child sexual abuse preventative behaviours. The Stewards of Children programme was found to positively impact child

sexual abuse knowledge, attitudes and prevention efforts when compared to the waiting list control group. In-person and web-based training was found to be equally efficacious in increasing knowledge and preventative behaviours in childcare professionals. The results of this evaluation suggest that Stewards of Children is a beneficial child sexual abuse prevention programme.

References

Darkness to Light website:

www.darknesstolight.org

Darkness to Light pressroom:

http://www.d2l.org/site/c.4dICIJOkGcISE/b.6353313/k.D2B2/Darkness_to_Light_Press_Room.htm

Bennett, T. F. (2005) Impact of *Stewards of Children* prevention curriculum. Unpublished.

Derrick, C.M., Flynn, C., Rodi, M., (2011). Benefits and limitations of online child sexual abuse prevention training. Unpublished.

The Center for Child and Family Studies College of Social Work, University of South Carolina. (2008). A Study of the Impact of *Darkness to Light's Stewards of Children* Program on S.C. Educators, including Changes in Knowledge, Attitudes, and Reports of Behavior Over Time. Unpublished.

Rheingold, A. A., Zajac, K., & Patton, M. (2012). Feasibility and acceptability of a child sexual abuse prevention program for childcare professionals: Comparison of a web-based and in-person training. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 21*, 422-436.

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