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Child Abuse in Oklahoma

What We'll Cover

- The CARE Center
- Statistics of Abuse
- Teacher Abuse & a teacher's perspective
- Abuse from a teacher – children's disclosures
- The effect on Victims
- Long term impact
- Recognizing Grooming & Changing the Environment
- Prevention and Reporting



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What is The CARE Center?

- We help children be brave and tell their story after abuse.
- We offer services to facilitate healing.
 - Forensic interviews, medical & wellness exams, counseling, court preparation and advocacy
- We are launching a prevention education programs for children, teachers and adults. This is a one-of-a-kind program called ROAR beginning with Kindergarten through 2nd grade.



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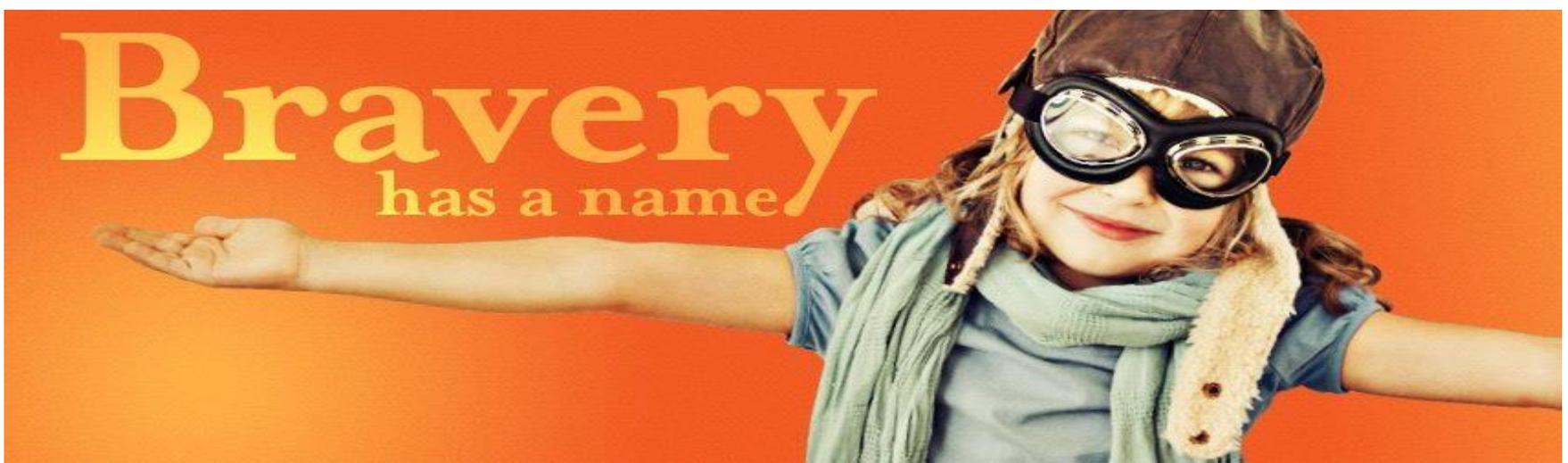
1 in 3 girls & 1 in 5 boys
will experience abuse
before turning 18.

Oklahoma ranks 3rd in the U.S. for child abuse

The ACE Study is ongoing collaborative research between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA, and Kaiser Permanente in San Diego, CA



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More than 90% of the time,
children are abused by
someone they know, trust
and love.



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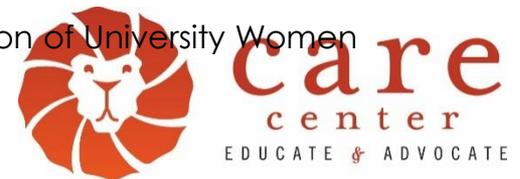
Resource: DCAC 2016 Statistics of Abuse, & Darkness to Light
2016

Teacher Abuse

The CARE Center is on target to serve 1300+ children who are in active, substantiated abuse investigations for 2016.

- Of this number 102 students were abused by a teacher. *(2013-2016 results from CARE Center only)*

- Resources: National Children's Advocacy Center, American Association of University Women



A Teachers Perspective

In 2016, a Moore high school teacher was arrested for sexual abuse of a student. Released on \$1000 bond. What happens after an incident?

- While school districts engage in some education, many are afraid to discuss and train. During an interview with a teacher who was effected by this incident, she said:
 - “There was an email sent to the administrative staff and nothing else happened. No follow up – no training.” We all wondered what we could of done differently to prevent this happening.” “Many teachers felt helpless and scared.” “She felt like some teachers don’t feel abuse with someone 16 or up is a big deal.”



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Specific Cases

- Teachers can sometimes choose students who are marginalized by bullying or seen as outcasts.
 - Dark or “strange” students make good targets.
 - Teacher became bolder and bolder.
 - Teacher is currently looking at life if convicted.
 - The girl reported in her interview she finally felt loved
- We have seen cases of where the teacher was accolade as a pillar of the community.
 - Coach for more than 30 years and widely respected.
 - He chose special Olympics children as his victims.
 - Once one girl disclosed, he committed suicide.
 - The victim said she didn't tell because he was her best friend.



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Specific Cases (cont.)

- Negative language and bullying:
 - “No one will believe you because you’re a “Thug, slut, liar, troublemaker.”
 - Children who are have previously been abused are seen as good victims for teachers as they are viewed as unreliable witnesses.
- Some of the “threats” heard in interviews...
 - No one will believe you because I’m the teacher,
 - This is ok because I love you.
- Technology
 - Cases with technology (Many with photo/video exchange) Especially with female teachers and male students.

Resources: CARE Center interviews 2013-current All still in court system.



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The effect on victims...

- The youngest children are the most vulnerable with about 27% of reported victims being under the age of three. [Center's for Disease Control and Prevention – Child Abuse Study 2015](#)
- Children with disabilities are 90% more likely to never report abuse. [STEPHEN J. CALDAS, Manhattanville College, Purchase, New York, USA and MARY LOU BENSY, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York, USA](#)
- Seventy-four percent of victimized children have emotional disturbances or behavior problems. [Professional Psychology: Research and Practice](#)
- Children who never receive counseling are 73% more likely to abuse substances, have mental health issues. [Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families](#)



The effect on victims...

- Seventy-three percent of child sexual abuse victims do not tell anyone about their abuse for at least a year and 45 percent of victims do not tell anyone for at least five years. Some never disclose. [Results from National Survey of Adolescents](#)
- Nearly 70 percent of all reported sexual assaults in the U.S. including assaults on adults, occur to children ages 17 and under. [National Juvenile Justice Report](#)
- Suicide attempts were 2-4 times higher among women and 4-11 times higher among men compared with those who weren't abused. Bolnar, Berkman et al (2001)
- Those working in a school environment identify just over 50% of all child abuse cases, more than any other profession. [National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect, Report to Congress, 2010.](#)



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Abuse doesn't fit a mold...

- Abuse victims don't always appear helpless or sad. Often they are overachievers, trying to push away the hurt and focus on something positive. However they may eventually need therapy and guidance. [Southern Region Child Advocacy Center, 2015](#)
- Did you know the following people are abuse survivors?
 - Tyler Perry, Oprah, Madonna, Doree Yamashiro-Olympic Gymnast and Katherine Starr, Olympic Swimmer.



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The Economic Impact

- The total lifetime cost of child abuse and neglect is \$124 billion each year in the United States.
[Center's for Disease Control and Prevention – Child Abuse Study 2015](#)
- Keep in mind, that's just for the children proven to be harmed each year. Millions of children are reported abused annually, so the economic costs compounds every year.
Amy Benincosa, at the [Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center](#)
- Children who receive therapy and proper medical attention are 62% more likely to move forward beyond the abuse.
[Southern Regional National Children's Alliance 2014](#)



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Recognize Grooming Techniques

- Treating a child as more special than the others.
- Making excuses to be alone with the child.
- Tickling or wrestling.
- Touching-appropriate or inappropriate.
- Taking a child to the bathroom or helping change their clothing.
- The student becoming unusually attached to the teacher.
- Exposing the child to nudity, sexual images or pornography
- Telling the child about sexual activity with others
- Sending text messages or videos



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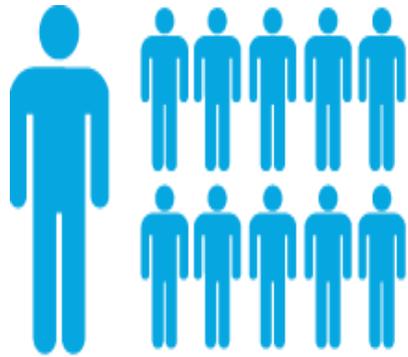
Changing the Environment

- Eliminate opportunity.
- If bathrooms, areas of the playground or hallways are located where others can't be seen – always take another teacher with you.
- Schools need to install cameras and have regular (four times yearly) training.
- Teachers need to have limits. No social media or cell phone interaction.



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Importance of Prevention



IT'S ESTIMATED THAT FOR EVERY
ADULT EDUCATED ON CHILD ABUSE,
TEN CHILDREN ARE MADE SAFER.

Source: Dallas CAC Training Series



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What we can do to stop the cycle of abuse...

- Strengthen existing laws like “Erin’s Law” and “Oklahoma Abuse reporting & Prevention Act,” to mandate reporting and education.
- Increase and mandate education prevention for teachers, child care workers or anyone with access to children.
- Enlist more parental involvement (checking of social media, cell phones)



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**Let's join together to
END Abuse in Oklahoma!**

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