

A top-down view of three children sitting on a paved surface, drawing colorful chalk art. One child in a red shirt and blue overalls is on the right, another in a yellow shirt is in the center, and a third in a pink shirt is on the left. The pavement is covered in various colorful chalk drawings, including swirls and abstract shapes.

Parents as Partners in Child Protection

Supporting children's safety
in your community

SCAN
of Northern Virginia
**Stronger Families
Safer Children**



Institutional Abuse Prevention

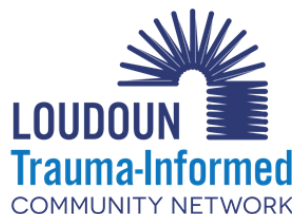
Rights-based Child Protection

Our Mission

To promote the wellbeing of children, improve parent-child relations, and prevent child abuse and neglect in Northern Virginia.



We make kids **safer. Everywhere they are.**



SCAN Evaluation

Make kids **safer**.
Everywhere they are.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Non discriminatory
Family's best interests
Children are supported by culture and tradition

Right to **be heard** and give opinions
Right to **freedom** of expression
Right to **choose** their own friends
Right to **access** information
Right to **not be punished** in cruel or harmful
ways
Right to **agency** (to act and make decisions)
These support healthy development and
prioritize the best interests of the child.



How risk is mitigated in kid-serving spaces

Focus on child wellbeing & safety above all else



Make training a cornerstone of approach



Increase monitoring of interactions



Collaborate with children and caregivers



Identify safety risks and solutions



Increase evaluation and accountability



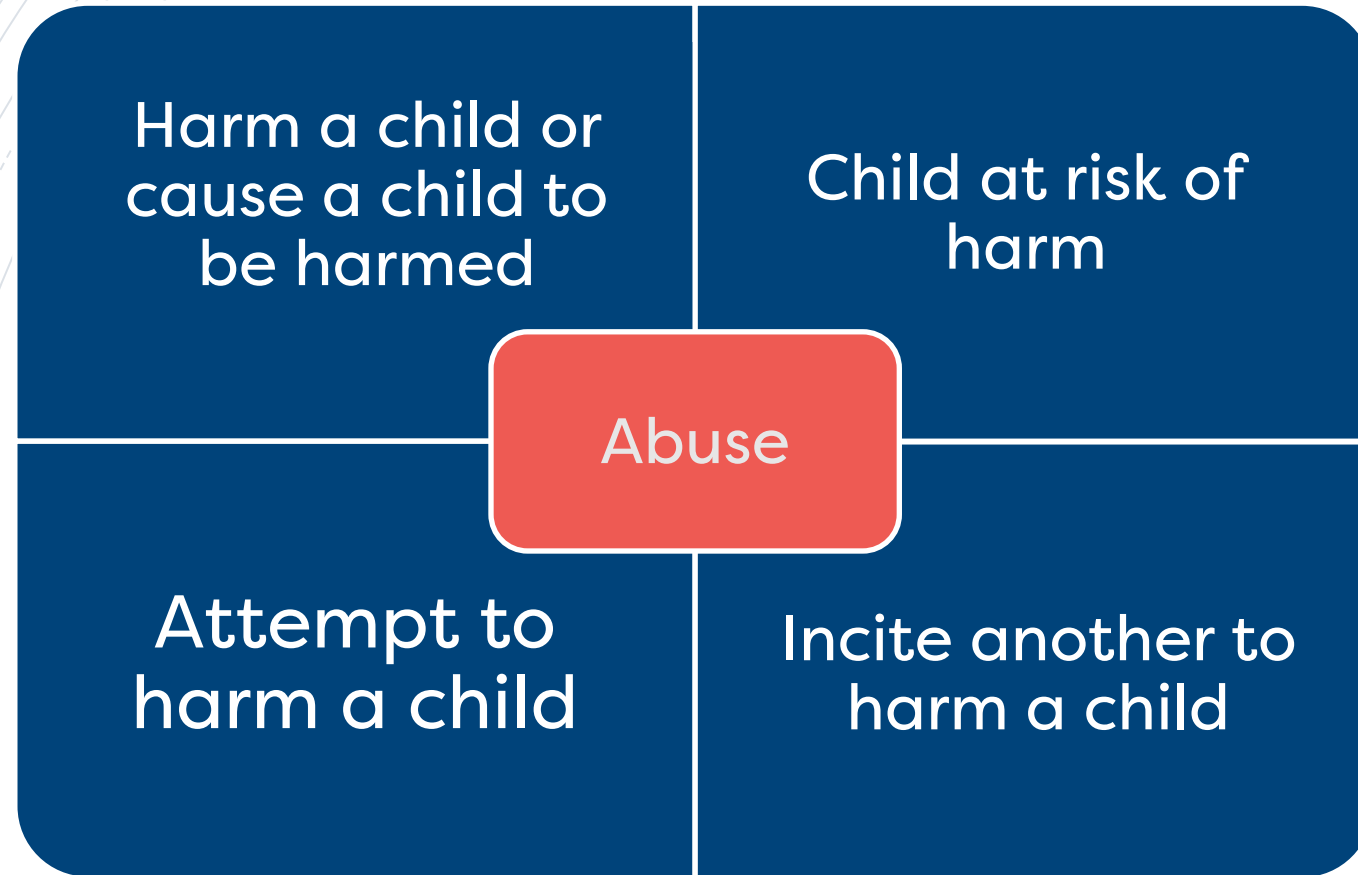
Address harmful youth behavior



Strengthen HR management

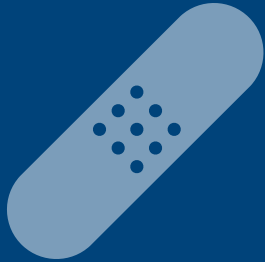


What is a child protection concern?



Vulnerability—an identifiably increased likelihood of incurring additional or greater wrong.

63% experienced **verbal**, 35% **physical**, and 10% experienced **sexual misconduct** by an **employee** of their school



Physical abuse



Emotional abuse



Sexual abuse



Neglect

Physical abuse Causing pain or an injury on purpose. Includes sustained physical activity and sustained physical restraint.

Sexual abuse Any act that a child experiences involving sexual things beyond their understanding or against accepted standards. Sexual abuse **may or may not include physical contact**.

Emotional abuse Persistent harm to child's self-esteem, and emotional functioning. Includes insults, threats, belittling, fear, withholding of affection, witness to violence, and expectations beyond age or ability of child.

Neglect Failure to meet basic needs for love, shelter, education, health, hygiene, and supervision.



Top 5 myths – and their impact?

- Abuse is unavoidable
“Everybody shares nudes”
- Kids make stuff up
- People who abuse are monsters
- Men/boys are perpetrators, girls are victims
- My child will tell me

Short and long-term impacts of abuse



Resilience and protective factors may lessen or mitigate the long- and short-term impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Poor educational achievement Poor peer relations Substance misuse
Sleeping and eating disorders Inability to cooperate with others Lack of
self-worth Inability to express love or accept love Obsessive disorders
Health problems Mental health problems Depression and anxiety Post-
traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) Attachment difficulties Self-harming
behavior Rage disorders Attention deficits

“A child’s history of
connectedness is a better
predictor of their lifelong health
than their history of adversity.”

Donna Jackson Nakazawa

What can you do to keep kids safe?



Recognize their ownership of themselves



Foster help-seeking behavior



Maintain healthy boundaries



Pay attention and be curious



Build assets and protective factors

Advice | Ask Amy: I'm annoyed my toddler nephew refused to give me a hug

Dear Amy,

Is there any justification or logical reasoning behind some of these [new parenting trends](#)...

One that is particularly irksome is [letting... a toddler choose](#) whether they want to hug an immediate family member.

On two recent occasions, I — a very close uncle — was [denied a hug](#). This was the choice of the 3-year-old. This choice was [reinforced by the parent](#).

I can't ever recall a time when I didn't want to hug or kiss a close family member growing up...for the five to 10 seconds a hug lasts...all the problems in the world seem to go away.

[How will this type of upbringing affect young children as they get older?](#)

- J in NY

Are there other ways to establish a caring moment?



Consent as ‘do no harm’



Model:

- It's ok to say no—even to adults
- Other ways consent is conveyed or not?
- Ask permission before touching someone's body
- If something happens to their body they don't like, it is not their fault
- Avoid normalizing harmful social media practices

How can caregivers model consent?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=>

2. Foster help-seeking skills

Give children the language to talk about what they are experiencing.



Help children identify people who can help.
Encourage persistence.

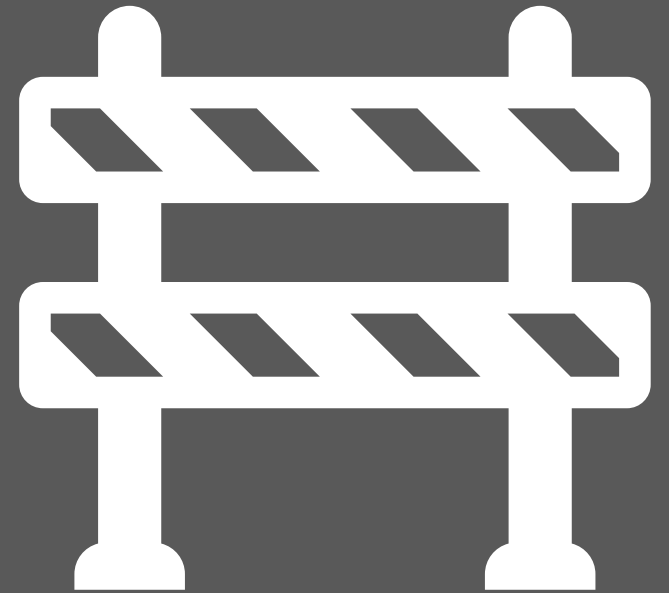


Explain the difference between a surprise
and a secret.



3. Maintain Healthy Boundaries

What kinds of boundaries are there?
What do they depend upon?





Volunteer J is well-liked by parents for providing special activities outside the program.



J has 'favorites' and many are eager to be selected for the programs and trips J leads.



J chooses a child from the program who lives nearby to walk his dog.



J is 'touchy', sometimes rubbing backs or feet. This persists despite being asked to stop.



On J's trips, everyone stays in one big room in sleeping bags.

Are you unsettled?

What barriers would keep you from sharing your concerns?

Grooming process

*The use of a variety of **manipulative and controlling techniques**; with a (child or adult); in order to establish trust or **normalize sexually harmful behavior**; with the overall aim of **facilitating exploitation and prohibiting discovery**.*

Phase 1 Gain access to child

Phase 2 Initiate & maintain abuse

Phase 3 Conceal abuse & prevent detection

What are examples of each phase?



4. Pay attention and be curious

- What are signs and indicators of harm?
- Ask open-ended questions
- Prioritize the needs of the child
- Report!

Ask yourself, what if I'm right rather than what if I'm wrong?

Tips for talking to kids

- Use a conversation starter
- Movement, get on their level
- Practice being a sounding board
- Validate, don't relate
- Use non-judgmental questions
- It's okay to buy thinking time
- Highlight strengths
- Be trauma-informed!





How it works

An illustration of a blue LEGO stick figure standing next to a yellow sofa. On the sofa, another blue stick figure is sitting next to a small stack of colorful LEGO bricks.

Easy to start

Open the activity on your tablet or phone (a bigger screen will be better). Grab your LEGO® bricks (or a pen and paper) and find a comfy, quiet place to sit together.

An illustration of two blue LEGO stick figures. One is standing and holding a small stack of bricks, while the other is sitting on the floor, also with bricks. They have speech bubbles above them.

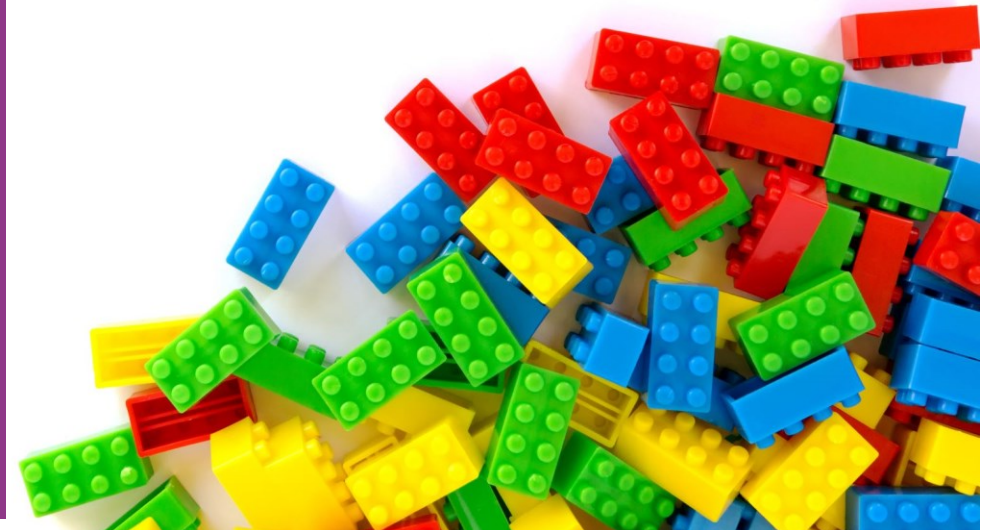
Just follow the story

Read the story aloud to your child. You'll find hints on what they need to build as you go along.

An illustration of two blue LEGO stick figures sitting on a yellow sofa. One figure is holding a small stack of bricks. They have speech bubbles above them.

Start talking

Use the suggested questions and conversation prompts to start chatting about digital safety and wellbeing.

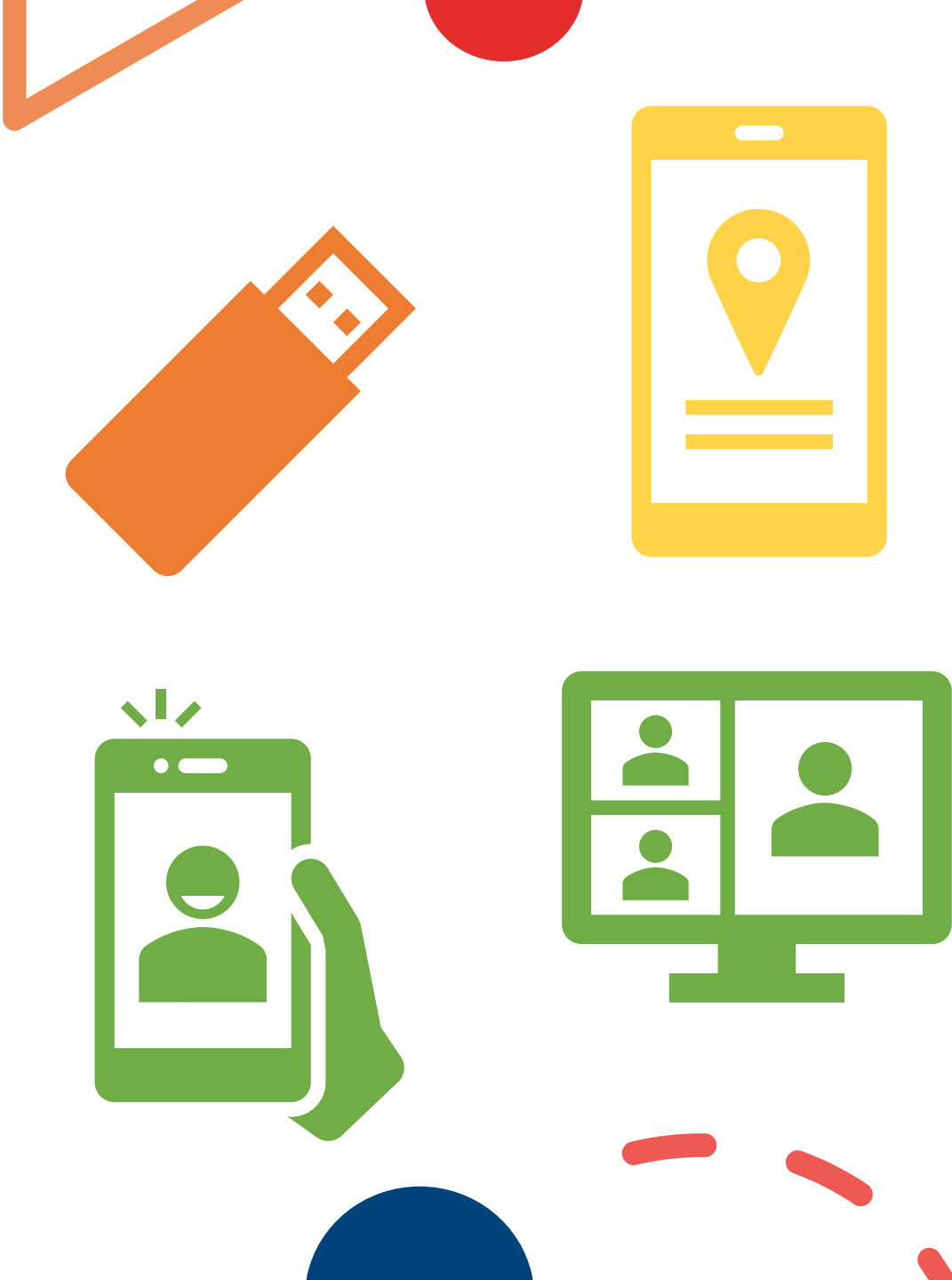


<https://www.lego.com/en-us/sustainability/children/buildandtalk>

Having the conversation

- Harm reduction approach
(what they do is more important than how much time)
- Help-seeking increased
- Space for mistakes
- Good listening
- Reacting well

Talk about pornography and sharing sexual images!



Talking about pornography and sharing sexual images

Model consent

Identify features of
healthy
relationships

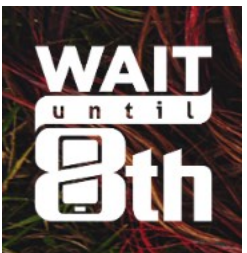
ASK!

Listen

Hit takeaway
points

Respond to
disclosure
appropriately

Make family
agreements on values
and use of
blocking/tracking
software





5. Build assets and protective factors

**Safe
environment
we create**

**Suitable
activities
we lead**

**Healthy
relationships
we establish**

What are you already doing?



Connection & repair

The number one most protective factor is consistent, protective, reliable, supportive relationships with caring adults– those who make us feel SAFE, SEEN, VALUED, KNOWN.

Not perfect people... but those who know to make the repair when connection is severed, even when they say or do the wrong thing.

Your wellbeing is a protective factor for children!



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Free, confidential help is available!

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline dial 988 | **report.cybertip.org** | **VA Abuse hotline (800) 552-7096**

[LAWS 24-hour Crisis Hotline & Shelter: 703-777-6552](#) For domestic violence and sexual assault support

[nami-northernvirginia.org](#) For family members of those experiencing mental health challenges

[The Trevor Project](#) LGBTQ+ youth hotline Chat – Call-Text <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help/>. Or 1-866-488-7386

[What's Okay](#) Text WHATSOK to 1.888.532.0550 or call (1-888-PREVENT) or email specifically for youth who have questions about any form of abuse or need support because they have been harmed or have caused harm.

The [Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline](#) Call or text **1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)** in 170 languages. The hotline offers crisis intervention, information, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources for children and caregivers.

[1in6.org](#) for adult male survivors of sexual abuse in childhood and [RAINN.org](#) hotlines, helplines, and survivor resources.

[Mental Health America of Virginia's Warm Line](#) is a peer-run service for individuals, family members, and other concerned parties in Virginia who would like someone to talk to, or who request community mental health resources, or who have specific questions about their recovery journey. Call **1-866-400-6428**, Mon-Fri 9am-9pm and Sat-Sun 5pm-9pm.

The [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) provides 24/7 support for survivors and their loved ones. Call **1-800-799-7233**, use the website's [live chat function](#), or text **LOVEIS** to **22522**. They also provide [services for those who are deaf and hard of hearing](#).

[SAMHSA Distress Helpline](#) for immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster. For services in both English and Spanish, call **1-800-985-5990**. To connect with a trained crisis counselor, text **TalkWithUs** (for English) or **Hablanos** (for Spanish) to **66746**.



Thank you for your time!

For TICN info or questions, reach us at IAP@scanvaorg

