



Youth Protection Training for Educators

Protecting our Youth

"Learning for Life works with hundreds of thousands of youth across the country every year. We are committed to protecting our youth from predators.

The following slides explain our policies, procedures, and barriers for protecting our youth. Teachers and parents who utilize Learning for Life should review these procedures and barriers every two years."

Learning for Life Youth Protection Training

- All Learning for Life participating teachers, aides, administrators, mentors, volunteers and professionals are required to take Youth Protection Training (YPT).
- Youth Protection Training is required prior to beginning any programs in school or in any school setting. A copy of the YPT certificate or record of attendance is required with the Annual Memorandum of Understanding.

Learning for Life YPT Guidelines

Administrative policies and Learning for Life youth protection guidelines in “Safety First” found on www.learningforlife.org must be implemented during all LFL programs.

Training Objectives:

After completing this training, LFL leaders will:

- Understand the preventative strategies to be employed while conducting Learning for Life programs.
- Be better able to recognize the physical and behavioral signs of abuse.
- Be able to respond appropriately to the needs of abused children and comply with reporting requirements.

Training Structure

Training is divided into the following sections:

- Introduction to child abuse and neglect
- Child molesters
- Prevention policies
- Signs of abuse
- Responding to suspected/actual abuse
- Reporting suspected abuse
- LFL youth protection resources

Introduction to Child Abuse and Neglect

Definition of Child Abuse

- **Child abuse** is the physical, sexual or emotional mistreatment of children.
- Each state has its own statutory definitions for child abuse that determine the elements necessary for removing a child from the home or for prosecuting the crime of child abuse..

Four Kinds of Abuse

- Physical Abuse: Non-accidental bodily injury by a parent or other adult.
- Neglect: Withholding life's necessities from a child that is vital to the child's safety, health, or well-being.
- Sexual Abuse: Sexual activity where there is unusual power used such as age or size, or misuse of trust.
- Emotional Abuse: Denigrating name calling that harms a child's self image.

Date Rape

- Date or acquaintance rape is a real concern for high school youth programs.
- More than 50 percent of rape victims are adolescent females.
- Their greatest risk is from social relationships with a boyfriend or date.
- Date rape is a crime and must be dealt with just like other forms of abuse.

Child Molesters and other Abusers

Child Molester

An adult or older adolescent who abuses a child for sexual stimulation.

Child Molesters

Anyone can be a child molester. Many myths exist about molesters. Here are some facts:

- Most often men but women also molest children.
- A child is more likely to be abused by somebody he or she knows or by someone in the family than by a stranger.
- Often upstanding members of the community.
- Seek access to children through occupations or volunteer service.
- About 1 / 3 are older youths.

Child Molester Strategies

- Forms relationships with children and their parents within organizations and extends those relationships outside of the organization's program.
- Uses secrecy to avoid detection.
- Seldom resorts to force; using “courtship” techniques to groom potential victims.
- Gives gifts and money for no apparent reason.
- Invites child to hang-out in the molester's home.

Child Abusers

- Child abusers tend to be individuals with low self-esteem. Their own needs are so overwhelming that they are poorly equipped to meet the needs of children.
- Often abusive parents also abuse alcohol and drugs.
- Abusive parents sometimes have unreal expectations for their children and malign them when they fail to meet expectations.

Prevention Policies

Prevention Policies

Learning for Life programs in schools and organizations must follow both LFL and organizational prevention policies.

Fraternization Policy

- Because high school programs are designed for young adults, there are often little differences in the ages of the adult leaders and the participants.
- It has been found that maintaining a close social relationship, such as dating, between adult leaders and youth participants is disruptive and, therefore, is not permitted.

Youth Protection/Creating Barriers

The following policies have been adopted to guard against abuse and to give protection to the adult leaders:

- Two-deep leadership: Two adult leaders—one at least 21 years of age—are required on all trips and outings.
- If male and female youth are present, 21 year old leaders of both sexes are required.
- There should be no one-on-one contact with youth.
- Separate (male/female) adult and youth bathrooms and showers on overnight activities are required.

Creating Barriers

- Proper training, preparation, equipment and safety procedures on LFL outings are required.
- No secret organizations, parents are welcome.
- Proper protective clothing is required according to activities.
- Discipline should be constructive and corporal punishment is never permitted.
- Hazing is not allowed.
- Youth leadership should be monitored and guidance given at all times by adults.

School and Classroom Leaders

- Off campus meetings are not allowed unless it is an approved Learning for Life program.
- Proper training should be given for all high adventure programs.
- Review the guidelines found in *Safety First* for conducting Learning for Life outdoor programs.

Signs of Abuse

Signs of Abuse

- Children react to abuse in different ways. Some children show no outward signs of being abused.
- Recent research indicates that many children at the time of their sexual abuse do not realize that they are being abused.
- Often the behaviors of child molesters are more indicative of abuse than the behavior or physical indicators of the child.

Signs of Child Abuse

- Child abuse is a cause of stress like other events in life such as a divorce, loss of a loved one, or family disruption or problems in school and can cause the same symptoms.
- Reactions to child abuse can be excessive crying, clinging, aggressive behavior, withdrawal, or depression.
- If any of these symptoms appear over a period of time, they must be looked into.

Responding to suspected/actual abuse

Disclosure

What if someone told you they were molested? Report immediately to your Learning for Life Executive

- **Don't panic** or overreact to the information just shared with you.
- **Don't criticize** the youth for telling of the abuse.
- **Don't promise** to keep it a secret; you are required to inform your youth LFL staff, who will advise you on what to do.
- **Do respect** the youth's privacy; take him or her to a place away from others to discuss the abuse.
- **Do encourage** the youth to tell the authorities; let him or her know he or she is not to blame.
- **Do keep abuse confidential**; don't discuss with other post/group participants.

Reporting Suspected Abuse

Reporting Requirements

- Reporting requirements are different in each state; know your state's reporting requirements.
- In some states youth care professionals are required to report abuse.
- No state requires the person making the report to have proof, but that it be in good faith.
- All states provide immunity from liability for those who report suspected child abuse.
- As a volunteer, you are cautioned to refrain from investigating the abuse but leaving it to the professionals.

Reporting Suspected Abuse

- Follow your school/organization's reporting policies.
- If abuse is suspected in the LFL program report it immediately to your LFL Executive.
- LFL policies require all suspected abuse to be reported to the proper authorities for investigation.

Learning for Life will not tolerate any form of child abuse in its program and will take all necessary steps to remove offenders from participation.

Learning for Life Youth Protection Resources

Youth Protection Resources

- On-line Youth Protection Training at www.learningforlife.org.
- Youth Protection age appropriate resources:
 - – “Play It Safe” DVD
 - – “Super Safe” CD
 - – “Youth Protection Safety Awareness Guide” and DVD (English & Spanish)
 - – “A Time To Tell” DVD
 - – “It Happened To Me” DVD
 - – “How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse”
 - – “Fact Every Teen Should Know About Sexual Abuse”
 - – Safety Seekers Activity Book (English & Spanish)



Youth Protection Training Certificate

- Congratulations you have just completed the Learning for Life Youth Protection Training.
- You may now complete the Certificate of Completion on the last page.
- Maintain a copy of your YPT Certificate of Completion with your Annual Memorandum of Understanding or prior to beginning any programs.

To complete and print your certificate on the next page for your records.

LEARNING FOR LIFE

Certificate of Completion

Learning for Life Youth Protection Training

Signature _____ Date _____



Certificate of Completion

Learning for Life Youth Protection Training

Signature

Date