

# WHY HIGHER EDUCATION?

Every year, colleges and universities host children on their campuses in a variety of settings. For many communities, college campuses are more than institutions for higher learning. They are workforce development centers. They are generators for volunteers for the neighborhoods in which they dwell. Their faculty and employees are productive members of their communities. They are cultural and entertainment meccas. College campuses are woven into the fabric of the communities in which they live.

Sue Paterno has spent the majority of her life supporting and volunteering at her alma mater. After learning more about "nice guy offenders," she believed that colleges and universities, regardless of their size, have the ability and an obligation to play a role in increasing the awareness and the prevention of sexual victimization of children when they can. Experts estimate that 1 in 10 children are sexually abused before their 18th birthday. 1 in 6 men and 1 in 4 women report having experienced sexual abuse during childhood.

The Circles of Safety for Higher Education® training program has the ability to make an impact now, and well into the future.

“ Together we were able to partner with the Stop It Now!® experts to develop a viable path to addressing the sexual abuse of children--for the future of our campus and our community. ”

**Aminta Hawkins Breaux, Ph.D.**

*Vice President for Advancement, Millersville University,  
Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education*

“ PASSHE has played an integral part in assisting Stop It Now!® in developing a training program specifically for higher education. We are proud to be a leader in this endeavor. ”

**Frank T. Brogan,**

*Chancellor, Pennsylvania State System for Higher Education*



## CIRCLES OF SAFETY

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



Through the generosity and vision of Sue Paterno, Stop It Now!® was able to customize and implement the Circles of Safety® pilot program for higher education settings through its collaboration with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Staffing, data collection, curriculum adaptation, implementation, training, and external evaluation by nationally renowned Prevention Innovations at the University of New Hampshire were supported through this grant.

### Questions?

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Program Director

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## CIRCLES OF SAFETY

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



Circles of Safety for Higher Education® addresses the need for a campus-wide, multidisciplinary team approach to the prevention of child sexual abuse. Grounded in a process-oriented pedagogy, this training provides the tools for the prevention of child sexual abuse and helps college campuses begin to create a culture of prevention.

# BE ON THE FRONT LINES OF PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

## Create a Culture of Prevention

Stop It Now!® and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education collaborated for a 23 month pilot program to customize the Circles of Safety® curriculum for the higher education setting. The program relied on a tiered approach that involved system leadership, 14 individual campus leadership teams, faculty, students, summer camp directors, as well as representatives from residence life, athletics, student affairs, counseling offices, legal counsel, human resources, communication, health clinics, Greek life, Women's Centers and internship placement. More than 144 professionals representing all areas on campus were involved in the pilot program.



## How Circles of Safety® Works

The training provided participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to increase awareness and understanding of how to create safer conditions for children visiting their campuses as well as address interactions between children and staff or students both on and off the campus property. They formed "Prevention Squads" which led, and continue to lead the prevention efforts at their respective universities.

The information shared at the two-day training was not a straight transfer of knowledge, but rather allowed and empowered employees to create a culture of prevention within their own campus structures. Colleagues left the training as highly informed individuals who were prepared to integrate this new information within their sphere of influence both on and off the campus.

**By bringing the Circles of Safety® program to your campus you will help administration, faculty, staff and students:**

- Learn practical steps to prevent sexual abuse
- Define behaviors along a continuum from appropriate to inappropriate to harmful to illegal
- Define at least two critical strategies in each of these four areas:
  - Screening and selecting employees and volunteers
  - Guidelines on interactions between individuals
  - Monitoring behavior
  - Responding to inappropriate behavior and breaches in policy
- Implement a prevention focused action plan and deploy prevention training



**“** The Circles of Safety for Higher Education® program brings full circle the work that PA's State System and its 14 universities are doing to not only provide a safe campus environment but to also ensure that each university is committed to the prevention of child sexual abuse. **”**

**Dr. Kathleen M. Howley**  
Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs

## Program activities include:

- Consultation with Now!® staff on organizing your team and preparing for the training
- Two-day training delivered by two Now!® Circles of Safety® trainers
- Follow-up consultation to support team efforts

## Effectiveness

With the stated goal of bystander mobilization, Stop It Now!® and Prevention Innovations Research Center of the University of New Hampshire collaborated to customize and evaluate Now!'s Circles of Safety® curriculum. Preliminary evaluation results, provided by the researchers, show statistically significant positive outcomes reported by training participants on a number of knowledge and attitude changes.

## These include:

- Statistical knowledge relating to victims of child sexual abuse (CSA)
- Knowledge about who can be at risk to abuse
- Feelings of certainty and comfort level in abilities to prevent or intervene in situations of risk for sexual abuse
- Overall levels of confidence, comfort, and knowledge about recognizing the warning signs of adults' behavior such as inappropriate boundaries with children
- Report the intent to engage in behaviors to prevent and intervene in concerning situations on campus



Circles of Safety for Higher Education® is a program of Stop It Now!, a national organization preventing child sexual abuse since 1992. [StopItNow.org](http://StopItNow.org)

Stop It Now!® is affiliated with Klingberg Family Centers. [Klingberg.org](http://Klingberg.org)