

Prevention Innovations evaluated Stop It Now!'s Circles of Safety for Higher Education® program for higher education. The results of our assessment demonstrate the efficacy of the "Circles of Safety" bystander-focused curriculum for preventing and ending child sexual abuse in higher education settings.

Prevention Squad members from each of the 14 Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) institutions completed surveys before and after attending a two-day curriculum training led by Stop It Now!'s staff. We performed analyses on data from the surveys and found statistically significant changes in the predicted direction in the participants' pre- to post-training scores on key knowledge and attitude measures.

More specifically, post-curriculum outcomes showed participants':

- Increased knowledge about statistics such as those describing the percent of children in the United States who experienced sexual abuse as children by someone they know, and the number of students in the US who enter college every year who have disclosed that they had been sexual abused as children.
- More comprehensive recognition about who can be a perpetrator of child sexual abuse, such as another child or adolescent as well as a stable, employed, respectable member of the community.
- Higher overall confidence, comfort and knowledge about recognizing the warning signs of adults' behavior that may point to sexual interest in children or inappropriate boundaries with children.
- Greater certainty of and comfort in their abilities to take actions to prevent or intervene in situations of child sexual abuse on campus.

Additionally, we conducted content analyses on open-ended responses about their assessment of the training. When asked what they found most useful about the training, the most common responses included "Information and Resources" (e.g., Warning Signs, policy, follow up plans, handouts) and "Interactions, Discussions, Activities, and Role-Plays." Another key finding is that that participants reported that they wanted continuing training on preventing and ending child sexual abuse at institutions of higher education, and the most common suggestion was to have the training annually.

This evaluation shows the effectiveness of Circles of Safety training at increasing ways that employees at universities think about helping to prevent child sexual abuse. We know that part of helping people take action to address child abuse risk is helping them be more aware of the problem and more confident about what they can do. It is also important that people also said that they wanted ongoing training. This fits too with what we know about helping people take action, that learning is not a one time or short-term event but an ongoing process.

*Prevention Innovations Research Center* develops and evaluates prevention strategies, evidence-based measures to document the problems of sexual and relationship violence and stalking, and comprehensive community tools to effectively address the causes of violence. Our research and prevention efforts emphasize the importance of using a community bystander focus while examining the continuum of violence.