



December 22, 2011

Dear Friends,

The arrest of Penn State's former assistant coach for additional allegations of sexual abuse has again evoked outrage and concern from the staff of the San Francisco Child Abuse Prevention Center (Prevention Center). The allegations greatly sadden and disturb us, but also remind us of the power we all have to reduce or stop the likelihood of child sexual abuse.

The fact that the perpetrator is a known, trusted adult in 90% of sexual abuse cases, allows each of us to take effective action to prevent abuse. All adults can and should:

- Learn the signs of child sexual abuse (*See D2L.org or Onewithcourage.org*).
- Discuss abuse and realize that it can happen *to anyone, by anyone, in any community*.
- Report suspected abuse to Child Protective Services (415-558-2650). The Prevention Center's TALK Line (415-441-KIDS) offers counseling and can answer questions where abuse is suspected.

Parents and caretakers should take the following additional steps to protect children from sexual abuse:

- Talk to children about their bodies and safe and unsafe touches.
- Help children learn to say "No" and to know who to go to when uncomfortable situations occur.
- Avoid situations where an adult seeks significant amounts of time with a child.
- Listen to children when abuse is disclosed and assure them that they are believed and not at fault.

The Prevention Center provides education and training that supports children, parents, and professionals in taking action against abuse and neglect. For example, our Child Safety Awareness program works with approximately 6,700 children each year to teach skills that will help keep these children safe in dangerous or abusive situations and then reinforces this training in seminars for parents. The profound impact of these programs is reflected in the 33% increase of reports to Child Protective Services in the public elementary schools these programs serve. Thus, children reported abuse and adults listened and acted to protect the children.

The Prevention Center is committed to preventing the harm from sexual abuse – as well as other forms of child abuse and neglect – before it happens. To learn more about our work and support us in these efforts, please contact Katie Skoog at Katie.Skoog@sfcapc.org.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Albright".

Katie Albright
Executive Director