

WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 2023
SMHS Room B121 (HS Conference Room)

Wellness Committee Meeting Members Present: Nicola Bordelon - SPS Nursing Dept Head, Cindy Desimone - SMHS Nurse, Matt Carney - Abbey Food Group, Emily Cataldo - District PT, Lisa Cahill - District Adaptive PE Teacher, Marty Cosgrove - SMHS PE / Health Teacher, Tracy Goodwin - School Committee Liaison, **1. Call meeting to order**

Meeting opened at 4:00 PM, by Nurse Bordelon.

2. Susan Whalley and Chris Morin (Preventionists from Independence House) from Enough Abuse

Child Sexual Abuse is a [silent epidemic](#) and a public health problem, devastating so many lives. How can we as a school system take the helm in our community to protect the vulnerable? Susan Whalley and Chris Morin of the Enough Abuse Campaign presentation described the nature and prevalence of child sexual abuse and how we as educators, parents and students can create a safety-net by deepening our own awareness.

The presentation provided an overview of the variety of workshops offered, and tools available for parents, students and faculty. This is a follow-up to the well-received workshop for our school nurses last fall.

87% of teachers unaware of the sign of child sexual abuse out of those surveyed. Under-reporting of sexual abuse children rarely make up accusations.

The definition of sexual abuse is a sex act between adult and child that is abusive and illegal.

The definition of sexual abuse between two children - includes both touching and non-touching.

Abusers are trusted people who are integrated into our community. Substitute teacher, School Committee member, coach, pediatrician, camp counselor, church volunteer are some examples.

These trusted people are patient and can build trust slowly over time before actually abuse, using gifts, money and special treats. They have select jobs where they have legitimate access to children and can carefully choose their preferred victim targets.

How can we become more aware/recognize?

- A Major change in personality in a child
- Be on top to stop early age of consent age 16; look at the power structure of this relationship
- Encourage people to build knowledge to speak to legislature

What are the abuser behavior signs?

- They do not appear to have adult friends; they prefer kids
- They find ways to be alone with a child or teen where adults won't be interrupted (child car ride)
- They discuss their own sexual preferences
- They ignore a child's verbal or physical cues that they don't want to be touched, hugged or tickled

When a child discloses abuse, believe them and be calm and supportive. If the occurrence happened in school, the school must report the disclosed information to the school administrator. The school must not interview the child to determine validity (so to not trigger and not to have the story changed).

Enough Abuse program for your school benefits!

- On-line course for \$20 gives free access to the leadership team to see if it would be a fit with the community. The Barnstable Superintendent and conversation between this organization which started Enough Works. There are separate organizations looking to donate money for such a program
- Code of Conduct added to the bottom of the school's website which is made available and becomes part of the norm
- Included in the Student handbook
- Included in the Faculty handbook
- Includes those seeking employment

Discussion

- All Day Learning workshop on 1/12/24 could be an opportunity for taking a deep dive early in the workshop, then take the course
- Nurse Bodelon to forward Dr. Quinn - Assistant Superintendent, Guy Boucher for Youth Programs, and the PTA. She will also send out information in a monthly newsletter

Discussion

Scenario raised regarding disabled students and female/male teachers and how to handle that structure?

What does the \$20 get you? A School Code of Conduct and the education of child abuse.

3. Questions related to the shared [Health Curriculum document?](#)

N/A

4. Review of proposed changes to sections 1 and 2 of the Health and Wellness Policy

N/A

5. Open discussion

N/A

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM. The next meeting will be held on February 7, 2023 at 4:00 PM, SMHS Room B121 (HS Conference Room).

Respectfully submitted by,

Lisa Kushkowski

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Recording Secretary for the Wellness Committee