

*Raising or Teaching a Deaf/HH Child?*

# *A Parent Shares about Personal Safety*



Learning Community  
Parent Information Center of Delaware  
January 24, 2023

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Hands & Voices O.U.R. Children's Safety Project

# Awareness Changes Everything



# Behind Our Why

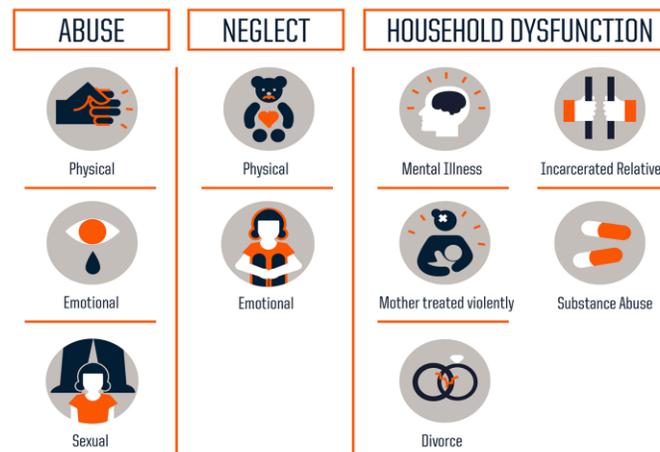
## Storytelling:

Dr. Harold Johnson: a late-career legacy

- [D/hh child who grew up to be an audiologist](#)
- High School Boy in search of girlfriend
- Abuse In a Nice Family “[In a Nice Family](#)”
- [Deaf/hh Plus student at school](#)

Breaking the taboo: ACES

## The Good news is...



# Harness Protective Factors & Strategies:



Support these in other parents (and in ourselves)

1. **Nurturing and Attachment (and Awareness)**
2. Knowledge of child development (both hearing and d/hh)
3. Parental Resilience
4. Social Connections for parents
5. Concrete supports for families
6. Social/emotional competence of children

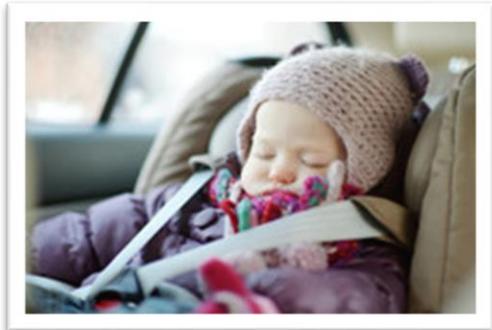
And in kids:

1. Know what healthy relationships look like
2. Know they have a right to say no (ask questions, and TELL) and are developing as much language as possible
3. Have some social connections/trusted adults, a friend... **one caring adult can make a difference**
4. Effectively communicate day-to-day... Label feelings, mental states, body parts, secret/surprises, Story retell with beginning/middle/end
5. Understand their emerging sexuality
6. Are developing their intuition: beginning to recognize “risky” situations

*What makes a child safe also makes them successful... a goal we were already focused on.  
One cannot learn without feeling safe.*

# Parents already promote safety

For littles...



For tweens and teens



# Intentionally teaching “People Safety”

Looking back... what did you wish you had learned long ago about dealing with humans?



# Attachment: The Secret Sauce

Serve and Return

Model, Notice and  
Reflect

Magic Mirror Neurons

Learn more:

[https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/issue/146/Supplement\\_3](https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/issue/146/Supplement_3)



# Step 1: Parents (and Caregivers) as Lookouts

Parents spend the most time observing, interacting, encouraging, trying to figure out and then responding to the meaning of their children's behaviors.

Daily routines of:

- eating;
- playing;
- exploring;
- diapering; and
- sleeping

provide parents with the essential contexts needed to interact, understand and nurture their child.



Maltreatment is predominately carried out by adults, or older children, who have gained the trust of a child's parent.



Our kids with any kind of differences, especially communication, are at the highest risk of maltreatment.

When are they most at risk?



# Focus on Prevention

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Younger kids are most at risk:

Choose caregivers wisely

Know their caregivers (who gets to be in the “circle of trust”?)

Ask Questions, don’t assume

*As kids grow*, teach simple safety rules: (more on this)

Observe, check in often, note any changes in how your child looks, responds, or reacts

## **The Kidpower Protection Promise**

**“You are VERY important to me!  
If you have a safety problem, I want to know –  
even if I seem too busy,  
even if someone we care about will be upset,  
even if it is embarrassing,  
even if you promised not to tell, and  
even if you made a mistake.  
Please tell me, and I will do everything in my power to help you.”**



**PARENT SAFETY TOOLKIT**

O.U.R Children's Safety  
and Success Project

January 2020



# Along with Prevention: Observe

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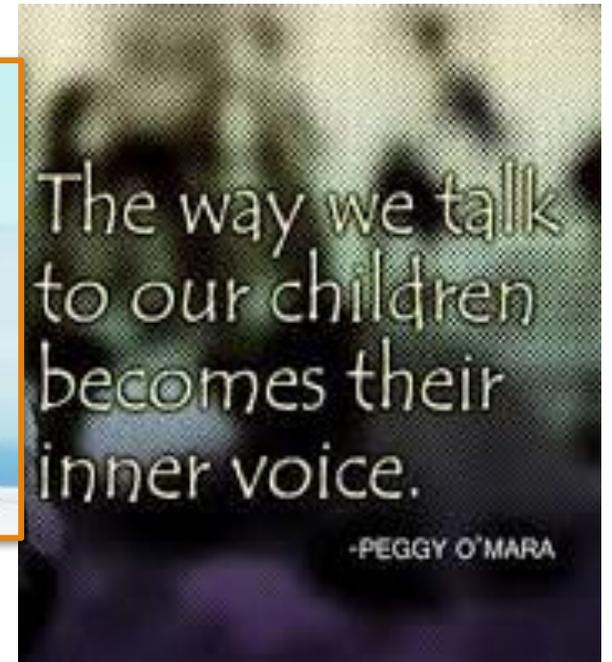
Know the Red Flags: for your own child, parents you support, and all the kids you get to know

## Behavioral changes

- Sudden reluctance
- Excessive fear or shyness
- Cruel behavior or behavior extremes
- Regressive behavior (thumbsucking, etc.)

Physical Indicators

**Looking and Listening for Concerns**



# Step 2: Safety Communication Skills...

Daily Check-in: Reassure you child/act like a Labrador when you see them!

Label and Use Words for Emotions/Mental states

➤ Books are a great tool!

Family Rule: Surprises, not secrets

Safety alert word/sign

Making and keeping age appropriate friends

- What is a friend? What do they do together?
- Our DHH kids can be socially naïve



# Words/Sign/Cues

...Get Your Attention

If your child can not name, or point to, the part of their body that hurts, their story can't be well understood.

If you do not know why they are upset, your ability to comfort them and to avoid the upsetting action is diminished.

Use routines with your child for daily teaching



# Safety with Touch

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In the Kidpower text entitled [\*Earliest Teachable Moments: Personal Safety for Babies, Toddlers and Preschoolers\*](#) the rule for touch or play for fun or affection should...

- ...be safe
- ...the choice of each person (Consent)
- ...allowed by the adult in charge
- ...never be kept a secret.

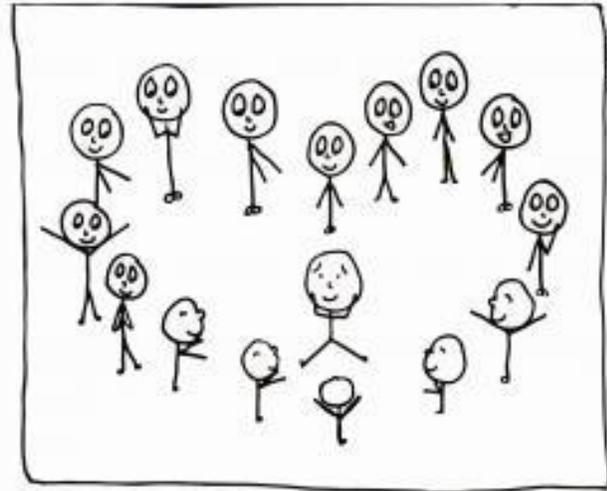
This safety rule can grow with a child into adulthood!



# Step 3: Establishing a “Circle of Trust”

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Who gets to be alone with your child?



What are the safety policies at school, camp, childcare, church?  
Do your friends/neighbors have the same safety rules as you do?  
Who else will be there (sleepovers)? How do we check in with our kids on return?

## Kidpower childcare safety strategies include:

- Research carefully who will be with your children.
- “Take the time to keep checking in, including making unexpected visits.”
- “Raise concerns right away about any potential problems.”
- “Notice changes in personnel, location, policies, and activities that may affect your child.
- “Adequate supervision so that adults see what is happening with children...”
- “Specific permission [required] from parents” for any changes in the expected routines
- “Age appropriate activities” for the child
- “Permission for older children to always be able to call [parent] if they need help.”
- [YouTube videos](#)

**7 kidpower Strategies for Keeping Your Child Safe**

1. Put Safety First
2. Keep your radar on
3. LISTEN to your children - and teach them not to keep unsafe secrets
4. Make SURE kids know you care
5. Don't let kids throw stones at safety or respect
6. Assess each child and make Safety Plans
7. Prepare children to take charge of their safety by practicing skills

kidpower.org | 30 years



# Strategy: Role-playing for Independence

## Older kids:

Increasing their responsibility or independence with guidance

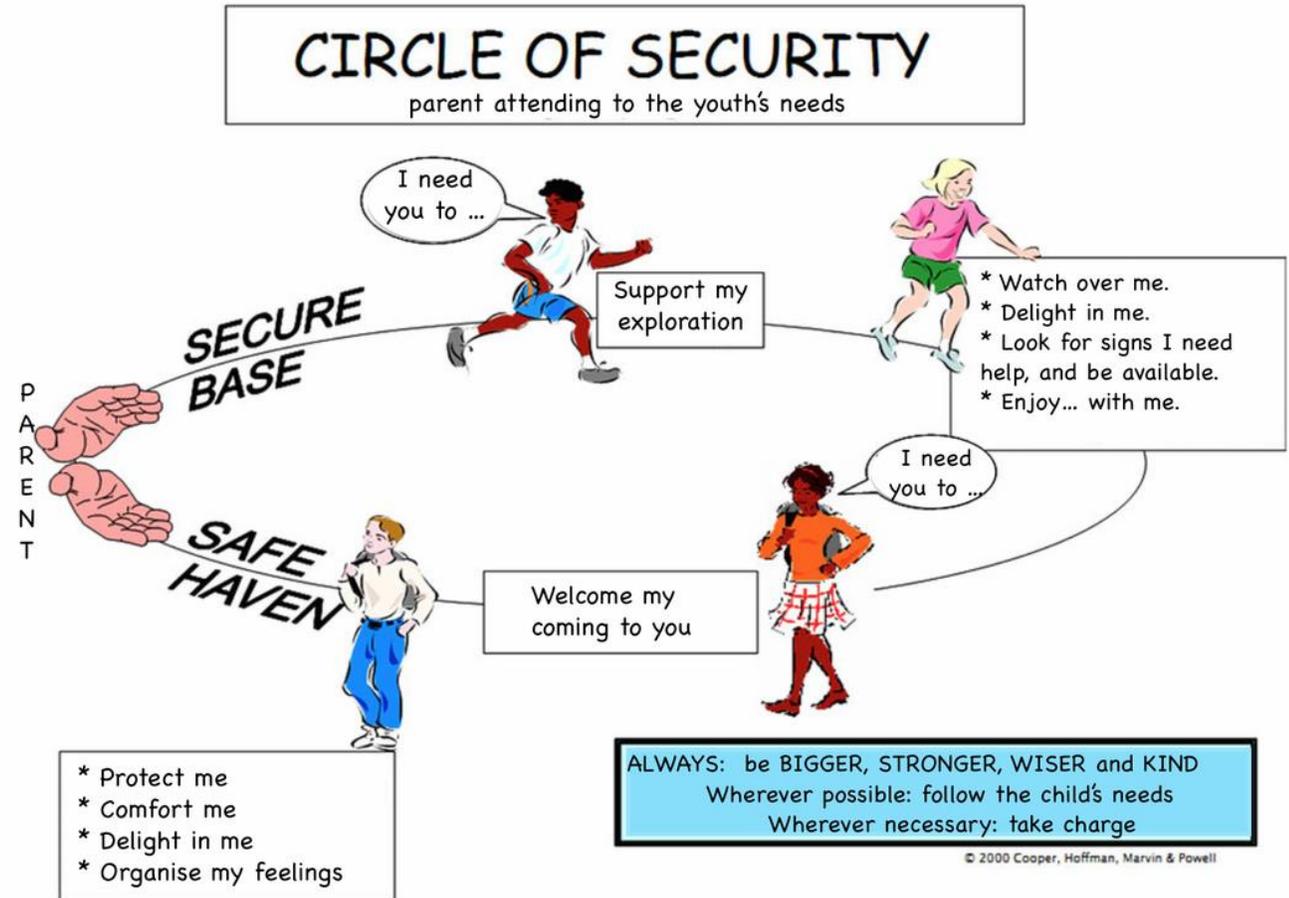
Keep up the checking in

What if? Teach back. 15 feet behind

Agreements for digital devices

Driving as a rite of passage

Consider their development in all areas



# Be an Upstander

## Personal or Professional Reporting

- If you are ever concerned for the safety of child, yourself, or someone else, call 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1 800 422-4453), or text 1-800 – 422-4453
- This number will connect you with a counselor at the [ChildHelp](#) - [National Abuse Hotline](#)
- Free and confidential.
- The Hotline counselor will you to understand what you are experiencing, or seeing and provide you with the information and support you need to act.
- **Crisis Textline** for adults and kids: Increasingly deaf-friendly



# How should you respond if a child tells you they have been abused?

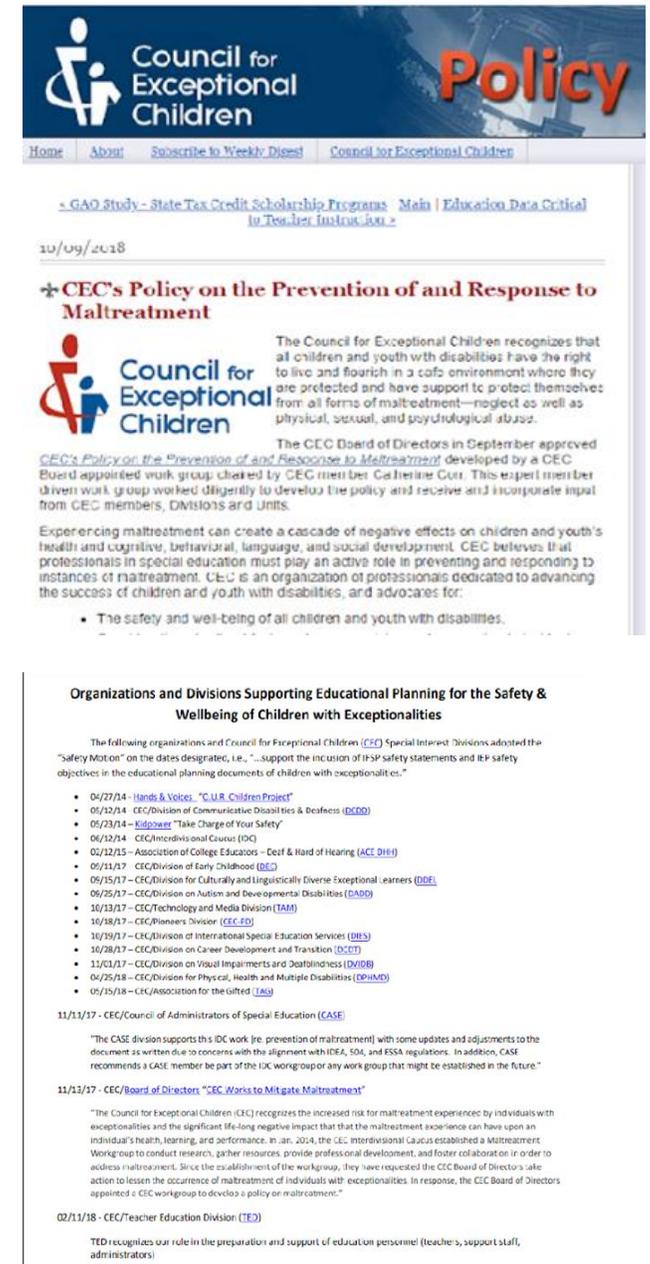
- Accept the child's information as true.
- Model emotional steadiness. (Afterwards, reach out!)
- Confirm your care for child; comfort them.
- Assure child it is NEVER EVER their fault.
- Ask open ended not leading questions.
- Reaffirm that you love and care for them.



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# So much more: Harness the IEP, bullying, adolescence...

- ❑ Encourage families to bring up safety goals within the IFSP/IEP/504.
- ❑ Support safety skill learning... often it is also language/social skills, access to DHH peers and adults, or accommodations
- ❑ [The Council for Exceptional Children \(CEC\)](#) supports this action through a recent policy concerning the prevention and response to maltreatment.
- ❑ See the IEP Safety Documents on the H&V website



The screenshot shows the Council for Exceptional Children's website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About, Subscribe to Weekly Digest, and Council for Exceptional Children. Below this, there are links for a GAO Study on State Tax Credit Scholarship Programs and Education Data Critical to Teacher Instruction. The main content area features a date of 10/09/2018 and a section titled "CEC's Policy on the Prevention of and Response to Maltreatment". This section includes the CEC logo and a paragraph stating that the Council recognizes the right of all children and youth with disabilities to live and flourish in a safe environment. It also mentions that the CEC Board of Directors approved the policy in September. Below this, there is a list of organizations and divisions that support educational planning for the safety and wellbeing of children with exceptionalities. The list includes various divisions such as Hands & Voices, CEC Division of Communicative Disabilities & Deafness (DCCD), and the CEC Interdivisional Caucus (IDC). The page also includes a section for the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) and the CEC Board of Directors' work to mitigate maltreatment.

# What can groups focus on?

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- What, why and how “People Safety” can be added to your child’s life.
- Know the risks reducing risk factors.
- Teach parents to establish the “Circle of Trust” for their child.
- Use strategies and resources to engage children about their safety and wellbeing.
- What if the unthinkable happens? Know how to observe, understand and report (OUR). Know who to call.
- Use your child’s IEP or 504 to reduce their risks for abuse.



# WWDWBW?

- With your child?
- With caregivers?
- With your team?
- With your students?
- With your patients?
- With your program?



Mark your calendar!  
The O.U.R. Children's Safety Project:  
Monthly Learning Community  
for parents, professionals, and D/HH adults

## Bring the O.U.R. Project Home

Dates: 9 am PT/10 am MT/11 am CT/noon ET  
Oct 11, 2022 through June 13, 2023, on 2nd Tuesdays each month  
Register here for Zoom link: <https://handsandvoices.org/resources/OUR/index.htm>

- Oct 11:** This Year We Will/CEC Standards
- Nov 08:** Allison Cunningham, AuD: Insights from CASA
- Dec 13:** Deeper Dive into the Parent Safety Toolkit
- Jan 10:** Debbie Mood, Ph.D: Attachment & Safety
- Feb 14:** Daiva Mullegger-Treciokaite, Global Parents of D/HH Children (GPODHH) Safety Efforts
- Mar 14:** Hannah Lumby: Lived Experience: Bonding during 1-3-6
- Apr 11:** Sharing the OUR Project in our Chapter
- May 9:** Integrating Safety Into OUR work
- Jun 13:** Vook Club, Chapter Count, This Summer I Will

Is your  
Chapter ready  
for the next  
safety  
question?

Kids can't wait for  
adults to be brave.

Resources to learn more:

[OUR Project website at H&V](#)

[Parent Safety Toolkit & Child Abuse & Neglect: Helping Parents Talk to Children](#)

Parents & Professionals:

Council for Exceptional Children: [Policy on the Prevention of and Response to Maltreatment](#)

Where could your school/organization improve?

[O.U.R. Children Project: Advocating for IFSP and IEP Document](#)

[Kidpower, Teen Power, Full Power International](#) Web resources

[Earliest Teachable Moments: Personal Safety for Babies, Toddlers and Preschoolers - Kidpower](#)

O.U.R. Monthly Call October-June: all welcome

Borrow our exhibit table!

# Abuse Stops Here: Making Room for Joy

Families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing can be overwhelmed, feel alone, worry about your child's communication and so many things throughout your journey.

AND as parents, we also know how important it is to just celebrate your child! See all the many gifts your child brings, to take time to enjoy each other, and to share your joy with others that understand.



# We'd love to hear from you!

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O.U.R. Project Page

<https://handsandvoices.org/resources/OUR/index.htm>

*...a child's emotional safety is directly linked to their physical safety and their ability to give consent.*

*Christine Griffin, WA H&V Chapter*

