

Sexual Abuse in the Disability World and What Can be Done

2018 State Task Force Meeting
November 7, 2018



PCAR

PENNSYLVANIA COALITION AGAINST RAPE

Help • Hope • Healing

Founded in 1975, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) partners with organizations and individuals at the state and national levels to better respond to and prevent all forms of sexual violence. PCAR works with its network of 50 sexual assault centers throughout the Commonwealth to raise public awareness, support victims and significant others, change public policy, and create materials that help communities prevent sexual violence.

What role do you
play in
child sexual abuse
prevention?



What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence occurs when someone is forced or manipulated into unwanted sexual activity without their consent.

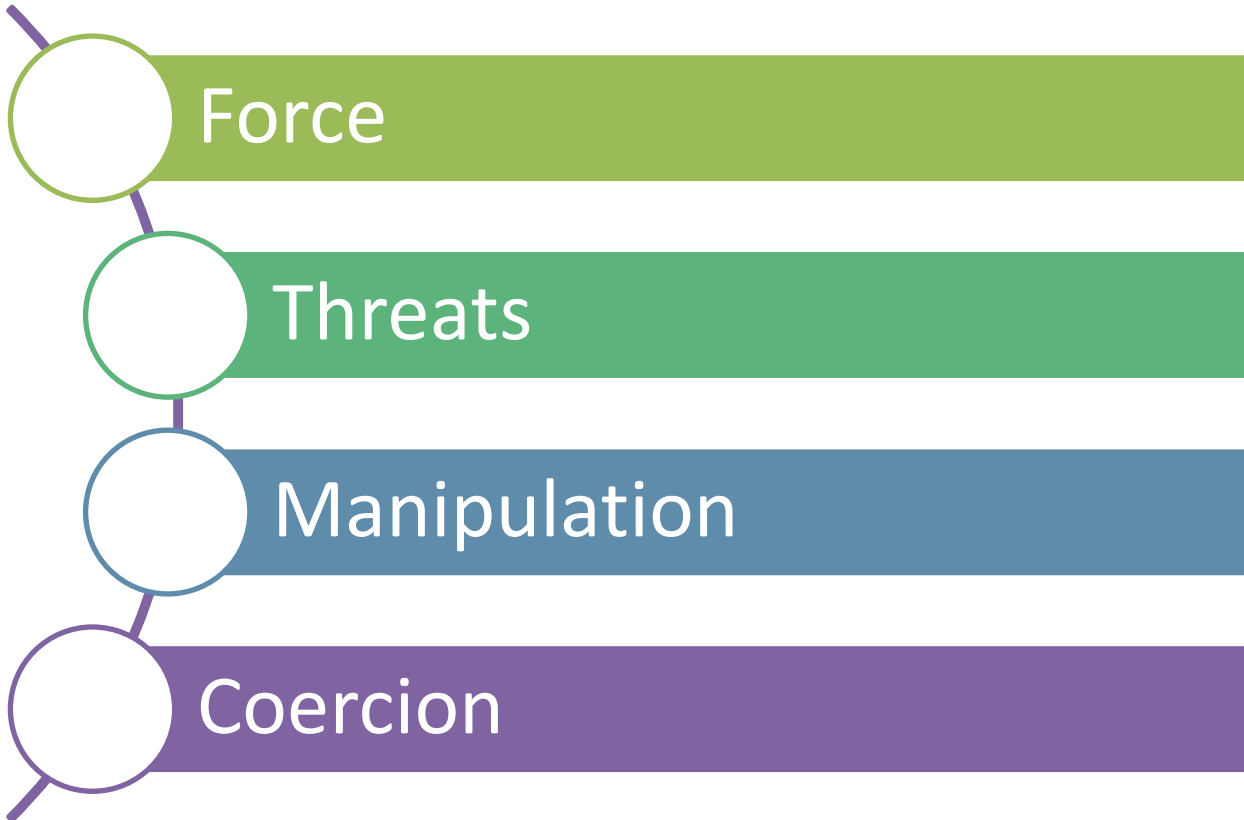
Anyone can experience sexual violence, including children, teens, adults, and older adults.

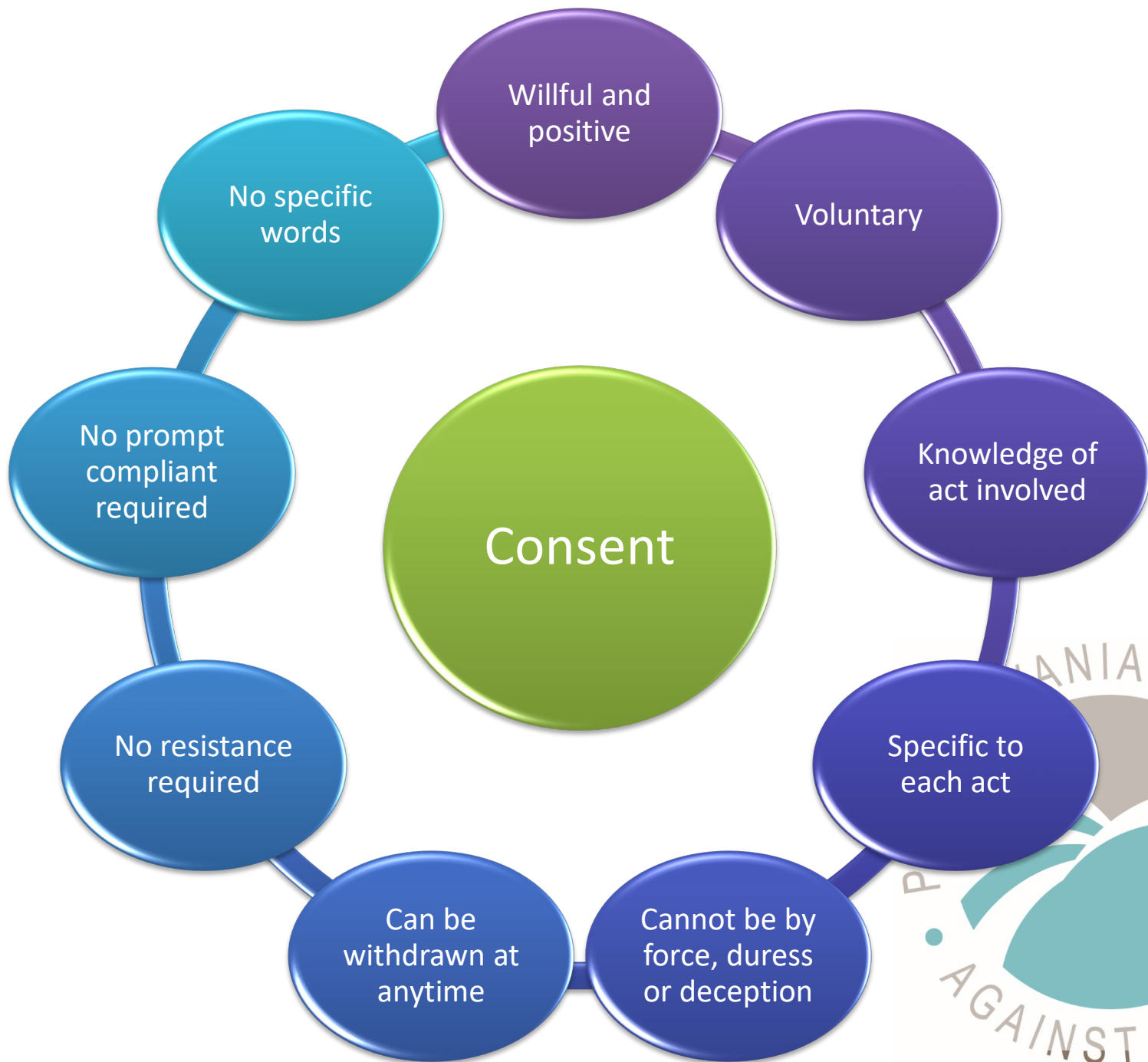
Sexual violence is a widespread issue that impacts **everyone**.



Sexual Violence

A person may use







Death

Mutilation

Rape

Unwanted Sexual Touch

Unwanted Physical Touch

Invasions of Space
& Harassment

Oppression

Attitudes & Beliefs

Specifics on SV & Disabilities?

- People with intellectual disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate seven times higher than those without disabilities (Shapiro, 2018).

Neurobiology of Trauma



Left brain = thinking brain

Middle brain = sensory
brain (sensations, affect
regulation, memory)

Amygdala = “smoke
detector”

Trauma can
impact
learning &
behavior.



Impact on Learning & Behavior

- Difficulty with emotional regulation
- Inconsistent academic performance
- Unpredictable or impulsive behavior
- Over or under reacting to stimulation in the environment
- Intense reactions to reminders of their traumatic event

Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse



Best Practices

- Adult Responsibility
- Comprehensive
- Trauma-Informed
- Developmentally Appropriate
- Social-Emotional Learning



Where do children get
information or messages
about sexuality?

What information or
messages do they get
from these sources?

What information do I
want them to get?



Healthy Sexuality

Healthy sexuality is nurtured when we...

- Accurately respond to a child's questions
- Recognize and reinforce positive interactions
- Provide information about bodies and sexuality
- Promote clear & open communication

The image features three large, solid-colored circles arranged horizontally. The leftmost circle is blue and contains the word 'Affirm' in white serif font. The middle circle is orange and contains the word 'Clarify' in white serif font. The rightmost circle is green and contains the word 'Answer' in white serif font. All three circles have a thin dark outline.

Affirm

Clarify

Answer



- Let them know that it's great they asked the question.
- Reassure them that you are a good person to ask.



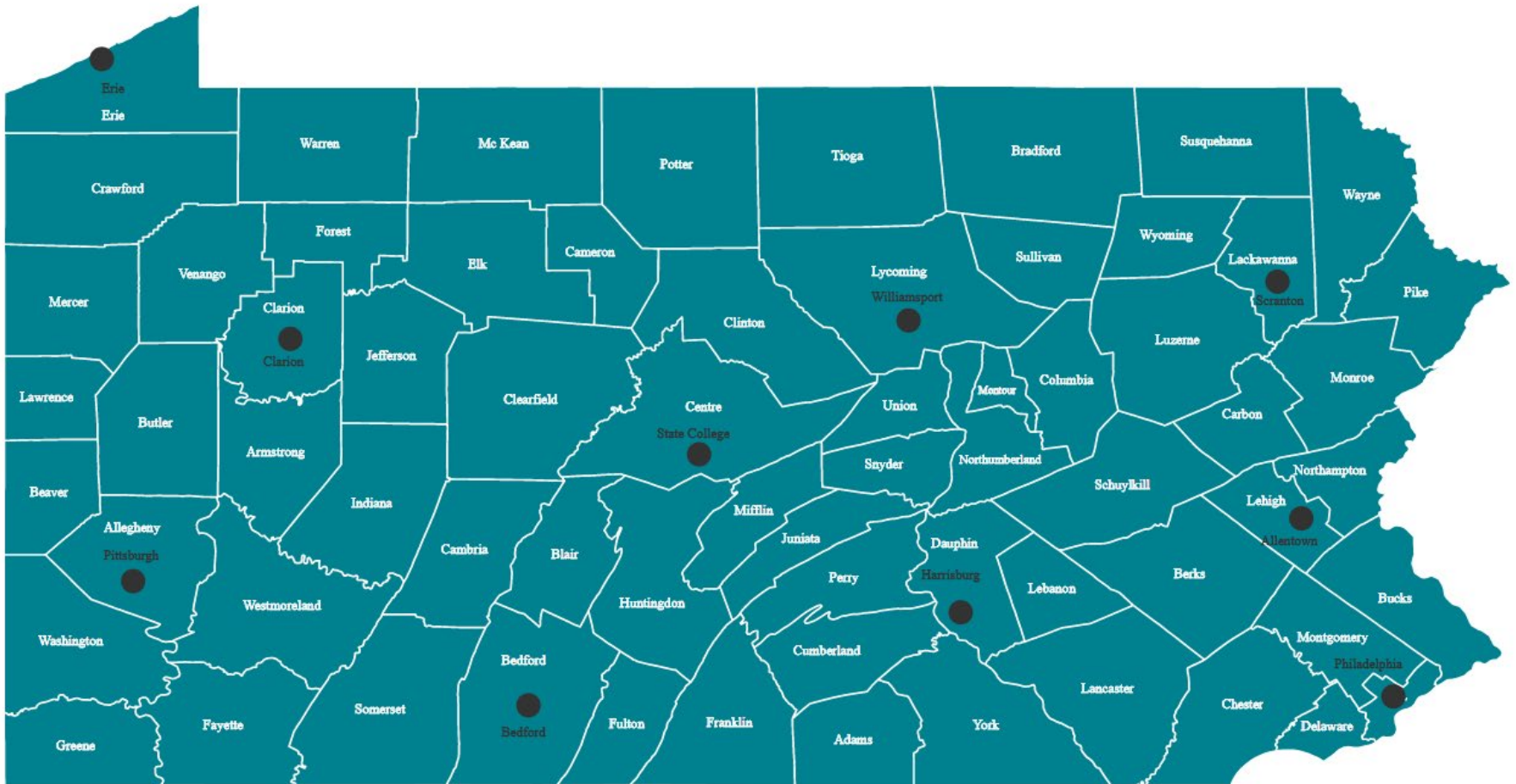
Clarify

- Ask any clarifying questions if you are not sure what they are asking.
- You might also ask what they already know about the subject.



- When you answer the question, address the facts, feelings, and values that it brings up..
- Encourage them to ask questions and seek information in the future.

County Specific Resources



<http://www.pcar.org/help-pa/locations>

Additional Resources

- **Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators**, *The National Child Traumatic Stress Network*
[http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Child Trauma Toolkit Final.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Child_Trauma_Toolkit_Final.pdf)
- **The Brain, Body, and Trauma (e-learning course)**, *The National Sexual Violence Resource Center*
<http://campus.nsvrc.org/>
- **Beyond the Birds and the Bees: Adolescent Sexual Consent and Disabilities: A Technical Assistance Guide**
(e-mail alivelsberger@pcar.org for a copy)

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape

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References

Calgary Sexual Health Centre (2018). *Supporting Consent, Healthy Relationships & Healthy Sexuality for Adolescents with Disabilities*.

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (2008). *Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators*.

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[http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Child Trauma Toolkit Final.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Child_Trauma_Toolkit_Final.pdf)

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont (2016). *Healthy Relationships Project: Care for Kids*.