

# THE CHILD ASSAULT PREVENTION (CAP) PROJECT OF WASHOE COUNTY

## Strategic Plan 2024

### Mission Statement:

The Child Assault Prevention (CAP) Project strives to empower children to be “Safe, Strong and Free”. CAP is committed to breaking the cycle of abuse, through education and prevention programs designed to increase children’s safety from bullying, abuse and assault.

### Vision of the Future

The Child Assault Prevention (CAP) Project will be the recognized leader in child assault prevention education in Washoe County.

To accomplish this goal, CAP and its Board of Directors will:

- Reduce the vulnerability and susceptibility of children to assault and victimization through education and prevention programs.
- Remain committed to breaking the cycle of abuse.
- Utilize research to maintain best practices in abuse prevention.
- Stay abreast of emerging societal trends (i.e. sex trafficking, human trafficking, Internet victimization.)
- Research and address shifts in social media technologies that affect CAP’s education and prevention programming.
- Promote the belief that children are worthy of respect, have the right to protect their bodies and remain “safe, strong and free!”
- Teach children to recognize abusive situations, stay safe, and get help if they need it.
- Advance the concept that we are all responsible to empower children with strength and confidence.
- Provide community outreach and education on breaking the cycle of abuse and victimization.

### Background

The CAP program was established in Columbus, Ohio in 1978 by Women Against Rape in response to the rape of a seven-year-old girl. Psychologists, educators, parents and children were involved in the development of a program that spread to many states and countries. In 1984, the Child Assault Prevention (CAP) Project of Washoe County was established as a private, non-profit organization to address the growing concern of child abuse in Washoe County. CAP’s mission has expanded over the years, but has always included the empowerment of children and families, through increased knowledge and awareness, to act in ways that work to break the cycle of abuse. Locally, CAP is staffed by an executive director, workshop facilitators and community volunteers. CAP has an active board of directors committed to the CAP mission and philosophy.

Each school year CAP provides workshops to over 10,000 children and adults in our community, both urban and rural. These workshops teach children to recognize and ward off abusive situations while giving them skills to protect themselves and get help in the event an abusive situation has already occurred.

### Needs Assessment

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2024 Report, Nevada ranks 47<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states in our nation in the category of child overall well-being and ranks 46<sup>th</sup> in overall education. Our State is currently struggling to get an organized, state-wide system of reporting child abuse and neglect statistics. During this organization, agencies such as CAP continue to seek out viable research information to support the work that we do. National statistics show that there are over 3,000,000 reports of child abuse annually in our country. While this account might seem alarming in itself, it is even more frightening to realize that 80% of all child abuse goes unreported.

Child abuse and bullying underlie many of the problems of youth and adults today. Studies show 1 in 5 students in grades K-12 is either a bully or a victim of bullying. 160,000 children miss school every day out of fear of bullying. 70% of 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders report being victims of bullying. Studies also show that 89% of girls and boys in youth centers, and 80-85% of inmates in prison have histories of sexual abuse. One in four girls and one in five to six boys will be sexually molested by the age of eighteen. Abuse has a direct correlation to teen-age pregnancy, suicide, substance abuse and eating disorders. While not all children who were abused grow up to abuse, almost every abuser has a history of abuse. Every day in the United States, at least five children die as a result of abuse. Currently, the annual economic burden of incidents of child abuse in the United States has risen to over \$80.26 billion. (2023 – Prevent Child Abuse America Statistics)

### Elementary School Program

The Child Assault Prevention Project is based on nationally proven prevention strategies using a skill-based curriculum. The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect identifies skills-based curricula for children as a major prevention model. Research has shown that “children as young as three and a half years old do benefit from these programs in terms of both knowledge and skills-acquisition”. In addition, child psychologists have found that school-based child sexual abuse prevention programs were associated with a reduction of child sexual abuse. Some conclusions have been drawn about the efficacy of skills-based curricula for children including 1) using multiple trainers with periodic reviews enhances children's resistance skills; 2) programs with active learning techniques, such as role-plays and skills practice, and involvement of parents at home increase effectiveness, and 3) persons who have participated in a prevention program are more likely to disclose abuse.

The Child Assault Prevention Project workshops use guidelines established by the following:

- The State of Nevada and Washoe County School District Health Standards
- Nevada Department of Education State Counseling Standards
- Washoe County School District Board Policy on Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

Our program, continually updated, has been a tool utilized by principals, school counselors and teachers for over 40 years to address these policies and curriculum standards.

Every school year, workshops are presented to elementary age students. The program is designed to include special needs, English Language Learners (ELL), day treatment, CLS and SIP students as well as mainstream students. CAP facilitators present the hour-long workshop to each individual classroom. The most common victimization scenarios children encounter are introduced: Bullying, Cyberbullying, Stranger Awareness, Internet Predators, and Physical and Sexual Abuse. Children are involved in discussion and role-play activities in which they learn to identify their own resources so that, should they need help, they know where to go and how to ask.

In addition to the elementary abuse prevention workshops, CAP engages in a concerted effort to impact our area's preschoolers and offers workshops to preschools in our community as funding allows. CAP has developed a comprehensive adult workshop that focuses on teaching parents, and other adults, skills to use to keep children safe from abuse. The adult workshop shows what to do if a child is abused as well as how to recognize signs of abuse in other children that they might know. CAP concentrates on providing workshops to elementary age students and offers the adult and preschool programs as funding allows.

### Rural Outreach

CAP serves elementary schools in Washoe, Storey, Lyon and Churchill Counties. CAP continues to explore expansion possibilities throughout the state.

### **Goal 1: Philosophy/Mission of CAP**

Maintain the Philosophy and Mission of CAP.

Success Strategies 2024

- CAP's Vision for the Future will be incorporated in all programming, educational material and community involvement.

### **Goal 2: State of Nevada – Erin's Law – SB394**

In May 2015, The Nevada Legislature passed SB394 Erin's Law to make child self-protection training a requirement of all Nevada school districts.

Success Strategies 2024

- The Executive Director will serve on committees created to review and update curriculum standards relevant to SB394 and child self-protection training.
- The CAP Program will be included on all State lists of child self-protection programs available to Nevada school districts and parents.

**Goal 3: Program/Curriculum**

CAP will continually monitor program quality, design and implementation, always taking into consideration CAP’s vision for the future plus community trends and current needs in child abuse prevention programming.

Success Strategies 2024

CAP will:

- Schedule and implement workshops for students attending elementary schools in Washoe County and rural communities as funding allows.
- Increase parental involvement and community awareness by providing informational material.
- Provide adult workshops as funding allows.
- Recruit and maintain a diverse staff that includes bilingual facilitators to provide translated workshops when appropriate.
- Expand outreach to include rural communities, pre-school, private, charter and home-schooled students as funding allows.

**Goal 4: Evaluation and Outcomes**

Each year, CAP will evaluate and document statistics showing program successes and challenges and provide essential information to funding sources.

Success Strategies 2024

CAP will:

- Request that each teacher, counselor and adult present during the workshops fills out a program evaluation.
- Distribute, collect and analyze retention questionnaires sent to random samplings of classrooms following workshop presentations.
- Send questionnaires to school counselors and teachers requesting the number of student disclosures following a CAP workshop.
- Review the evaluation process annually to make sure it reflects current trends.
- Summarize statistics in an annual report.
- Share Annual Report with stakeholders.

**Goal 5: Public Awareness/Public Relations**

CAP’s public relations/public awareness campaign will focus on informing the public, parents, businesses and community partners about child abuse and neglect prevention.

Success Strategies 2024

CAP will:

- Collaborate with other agencies to increase awareness of child self-protection strategies.

- Maintain an effective, informative, interactive website for the public to access.
- Make community presentations on child abuse prevention, child safety tips and information on the CAP program.
- Distribute informational brochures, newsletter and annual reports.
- Develop effective social media sites such as Facebook.

**Goal 6: Fund Development**

CAP is committed to a diverse fund development strategy to support ongoing programs.

Success Strategies 2024

CAP will:

- Identify and elicit support from new funding sources.
- Work with local media and businesses on developing and promoting special events and fundraisers to benefit the program.

**Goal 7: Personnel**

CAP will maintain personnel committed to the CAP mission and vision.

Success Strategies 2024

CAP will:

- Maintain a flexible and diverse staff of hourly personnel that can work in teams as needed to provide workshops to pre-school students, elementary grade students and adults.
- Assess trends with the goal of maintaining appropriate wage levels for all employees, as funding allows.
- Provide ongoing training opportunities to increase the knowledge and effectiveness of staff members.
- Maintain a collaborative relationship with the University of Nevada, Reno in order to provide paid internship opportunities to students, as funding allows.

**Goal 8: Board Development**

CAP shall maintain a Board of Directors consisting of community members who are committed to the philosophy/mission of CAP.

Success Strategies 2024

The CAP Board of Directors will:

- Recruit Board Members as needed with specific expertise to assist CAP in achieving its long-term goals.
- Observe a CAP workshop at least once during their Board tenure.
- Actively support and participate in CAP's activities.
- Actively work on CAP's infrastructure and ensure policies, procedures, and strategic planning are continually reviewed and updated in a timely manner.
- Be accountable for Board assignments, meeting attendance, and duties associated with Board position.

*(March 2024)*