

- Does everyone in the family feel like they can speak up and show little fear of the consequences for talking about the sexual abuse?
- Do caregivers take this seriously and support both children?
- Can the family show anguish, emotional distress, validation?
- Does everyone acknowledge that the rules were broken and had an impact on others?

VOICE
Empowerment, Bear Witness, Anguish

OPENNESS
Listen, Communicate, No Secrets

- Has a “no secrets” motto become part of family communication?
- Can children and caregivers express their thoughts and feelings with each other and cope with these?
- Is there consistent and fair caregiving – with structure, roles, boundaries, and conflict resolution skills practiced every day?

VORS

- Are people in the family able to take responsibility for their behaviours and accept natural/logical consequences for their actions?
- Are parents and caregivers able to support and hold children accountable for their behaviours
- Can everyone acknowledge mistakes or poor decisions, apologize and be honest with themselves about the poor decision or mistake?
- Are people able to focus on behaviours and not attack the person?

RESPONSIBILITY
Invitations, “Both And” Position, Accountability Axiom

SAFETY
Consistent, Predictable, Non-shaming, “New Normal”

- Have family members accepted and respected the safety plans or new rules?
- Do caregivers have some guesses about what developed and maintained sexually abusive behaviour in the family and has this been addressed?
- Are caregivers able to identify and address unsafe situations?
- Do family members feel like they have the freedom or permission to say “stop” or “pause” or “I’m not ready” if a change to the safety plan is suggested?



VOICE

OPENNESS

VORS

SAFETY

RESPONSIBILITY

The Child Who Experienced Victimization Can:

- * Acknowledge that the abuse happened
- * Feel that they are believed
- * Speak their truth from a place of empowerment (no fear of consequences for telling)
- * Express their needs and independent wishes
- * Speak and act knowing they have a free choice
- * Express a willingness for communication & contact to begin

The Caregivers Can:

- * Provide authentic validation & belief that sexual abuse happened
- * Attach no responsibility to the child who experienced victimization
- * Support needs of both children
- * Separate how they feel about the youth from their behaviour & hold them totally responsible
- * Speak their truth about the impact
 - * See influence of past communication & behaviour patterns & seek assistance

The Child Who Experienced Victimization Can:

- * Understand the meaning and function of secrets
- * Expect consistency in parenting and clear boundaries / roles within family
- * Express their thoughts and feelings, communicate directly and indirectly
- * Demonstrate healthy strategies to cope

The Caregivers Can:

- * Identify the role of secrecy in their family
- * Express developmentally appropriate messages to children
- * Provide consistency in parenting practices that are fair and developmentally appropriate
- * Model, within couple dynamics, empathetic communication and resolution of conflicts

The Youth Who Engaged in SA Can:

- * Acknowledge that the abuse happened
- * Speak their truth despite possible consequences
- * Express their needs re: Risk, Need, Responsibility principles
- * Willingly speak to acknowledge the harm caused to everyone, including self

All Family Members Can:

- * Acknowledge that the abuse happened & place the responsibility where it belongs
- * Speak freely about the impact, while separating the person from behaviour; freedom to disclose
- * Believe that the "new normal" ways of communication and interaction are beneficial & will minimize the potential for further abuse
- * Express an independent willingness for communication & contact

The Youth Who Engaged in SA Can:

- * Communicate effectively directly & indirectly; express thoughts & feelings; cope effectively
- * Understand the role of secrecy to gain compliance/maintain abusive behaviours
- * Expect consistency in parenting and clear boundaries in the home environment
- * Can be empathically attuned to self and others

All Family Members Can:

- * Demonstrate open communication of thoughts & feelings directly, e.g., no triangulation in communication
- * Recognize the importance of consistent & fair parenting practices, e.g., structure, roles, boundaries
- * Demonstrate a "New Normal" of communication & conflict resolution is practiced

The Child Who Experienced Victimization Can:

- * Hold sibling totally accountable (incl. understanding their body's physiological responses)
- * Feels validated by the family system
- * Demonstrate positive coping demonstrated after parents hold youth accountable
- * Directly and indirectly ask questions about the abuse (to youth, parents, family)

The Caregivers Can:

- * Verbalize the belief that the abuse happened
- * Support all family members distinct needs and place responsibility
- * Model accountability, apology, and experience natural consequences
- * Address their own thoughts/feelings about abuse

The Child Who Experienced Victimization Can:

- * Identify safe versus unsafe (thoughts, feelings, behaviours, physiological sensations)
- * Name and have trust that adults will keep them safe
- * Have freedom to express themselves
- * Accept the limits of the safety plan

The Caregivers Can:

- * Accept responsibility for implementing safety plans, congruent to the level of concern
- * Ability to oversee safety plan and meet the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of safety for all children
- * Identify and understand the impact of the past unsafe situations

The Youth Who Engaged in SA Can:

- * Accept natural and logical consequences for decisions
- * Develop internal locus of control & demonstrate a moral code
- * Experience a reduction in overwhelming sense of shame
- * Feel anguish of the harm caused to others
- * Apologize, make amends, have hope & act in congruence with a healthy future

All Family Members Can:

- * Speak about the abuse openly with each other i.e., "It's an open book"; "it's a thread in the tapestry"
- * Practice the "Both And" position: support & hold accountable
- * Acknowledge "truths": We make mistakes & can apologize, be honest with oneself about one's faults and flaws
- * Acknowledging their role in contributing the abusive dynamics/patterns
- * Focus on behaviours not the person
- * Acknowledge that ownership of behaviours and empowerment that one can change = hope

The Youth Engaged in SA Can:

- * Develop and follow their safety plan
- * Be aware of the influences that contributed to the choice to engage in sexually abusive behaviour, high-risk situations and cope differently
- * Accept trust building as a process
- * Empathically attune to the needs of others – or at least be aware of the potential impact

All Members of The Family Can:

- * Understand how or why the abuse was developed or maintained
- * Live their "New Normal" - having the right to feel safe, expecting adults to keep them safe, ensuring safe behaviours, communication & dynamics
- * Model relationships that are consistent, predictable and non-shaming
- * Identify and address unsafe situations
- * Freedom to pause/stop