

# A checklist to help prevent sexual abuse and molestation.

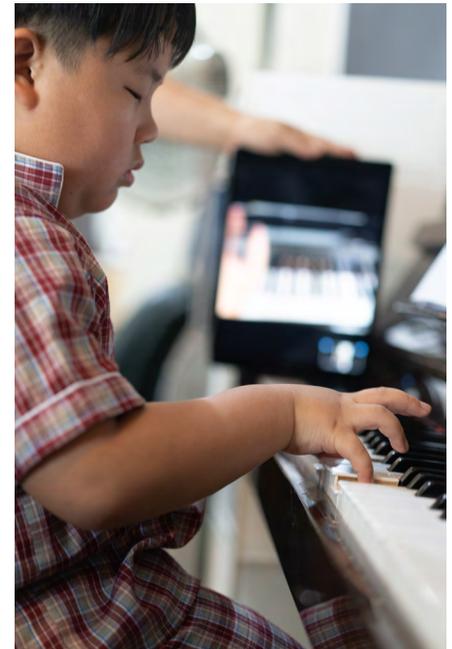
In the U.S., roughly one in 10 children will be sexually abused before they turn 18, and only 38% of such cases are reported.<sup>1</sup> Plus, the frequency of sexual assault against people with intellectual disabilities is high when compared with the rest of society.<sup>2</sup> Molestation incidents can be devastating to victims and to human services providers, which can incur liability claims and loss of reputation and clients.

## Check *all* the boxes to help reduce the likelihood of abuse in your facility.

- Develop a written, legally reviewed zero-tolerance sexual abuse and molestation prevention policy, and communicate it to all levels of staff and volunteers who work with children and vulnerable populations.
- In your policy, make sure the terms sexual abuse, molestation and related misconduct are clearly defined, and ensure that response actions to alleged perpetrators include suspension or reassignment.
- Conduct screening and background checks on all prospective employees and volunteers.
- Develop and implement an employee and volunteer training program that requires signatures to acknowledge they reviewed the policy.
- Limit one-on-one interactions to the extent feasible.
- Monitor your staff to detect signs of misconduct.
- Ensure that procedures for reporting suspected or observed allegations include at least two internal contacts with authority to implement response actions immediately.
- Maintain an anti-retaliation policy so that those reporting suspected abuse will be protected.
- Develop and practice specific investigation procedures for a trained internal team or outside third party.
- Be prepared to notify and cooperate with state and local law enforcement agencies if and when any instance of abuse takes place.

<sup>1</sup> *Child Sexual Abuse Statistics: The Magnitude of the Problem*, Darkness to Light website—[www.D2L.org](http://www.D2L.org) (6/24/15), pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Disability and Child Sexual Abuse: Lessons from Survivors' Narratives for Effective Protection, Prevention and Treatment*, M. Higgins and J. Swain, (2009).



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to help our members  
manage risk.<sup>SM</sup>

For your risk management and safety needs, contact Nationwide Loss Control Services: 1-866-808-2101 or [LCS@nationwide.com](mailto:LCS@nationwide.com).