

# TURN THE TALK

## AN EVIDENCE-INSPIRED PROGRAM THAT SEEKS TO EQUIP YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE TOOLS TO ADDRESS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE



According to the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault, the percentage of victims of child sexual abuse (28.4%) in Maryland is significantly higher than the national average of 9% with 64.8% of cases involving child sexual abuse at Child Advocacy Centers across the state. Such data compels us to respond to this epidemic through the lens of prevention using a comprehensive approach at multiple levels of the social ecological model. This model considers complex interplay between individual, relational, community, and societal factors. It also allows us to understand the range of factors that put people at risk for violence or protect them from experiencing or perpetrating violence. To have the greatest impact on child sexual abuse prevention, there is evidence by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



**CHANGE THE CONVERSATION ENVISIONS A WORLD WHERE WE ALL UNDERSTAND THE INNUMERABLE IMPACTS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND ARE COMPELLED TO ELIMINATE IT.**



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# PAGE TWO

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## UNTIL ALL CHILDREN ARE SAFE.

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that brief, one-session educational programs do not work to prevent perpetration, but rather repeated exposure through strategic programming is crucial to reinforce preventative efforts and create lasting impact.

Turn the Talk is Change the Conversation's evidence-inspired program that seeks to equip young people with the tools to address child sexual abuse. The goal of the program is to define child sexual abuse and discuss relevant laws, policies, and effects. Additionally, we teach children how to report child sexual abuse and minor sex trafficking, as well as how to investigate community resources and advocate for those who have experienced abuse. Turn the Talk offers professional development to support continuing education efforts for staff and parent



support trainings to equip caregivers with best practices for engaging with adolescents on sensitive subjects.

All content meets Standard 1D: Safety and Violence Prevention as required by the Maryland Comprehensive Health Education Framework. In fact, our curriculum was created using the Framework as reference to ensure messaging remains compliant with COMAR 13A.04.18.

In its year of implementation,

"We recognize the critical importance of connecting our educators, students, and families with community-based resources that will provide services that help educate, identify, or prevent child sexual abuse. Change the Conversation is a valuable resource to both our school system and our local community."

Carroll County Public Schools

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# PAGE THREE

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## UNTIL ALL CHILDREN ARE SAFE.

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Turn the Talk served 4,149 students across 152 classroom presentations in ten Carroll County Public Schools' middle and high schools with four unique middle school teachers and fifteen unique high school teachers. Additionally, five students received intervention support after disclosing child sexual abuse. Furthermore, Turn the Talk provided 10 professional development trainings to teachers in Carroll County Public Schools, Harford County Public Schools, Baltimore City Public Schools, and Boys' Latin School of Maryland. Topics included Child Sexual Abuse 101, Internet and Tech Safety for School-based Staff, Prevention Strategies in School-based Settings, Responding to Sexual Trauma, and Best Practices for Engaging with Adolescents on Sensitive Topics. Ninety-percent

"The CAC has partnered with Change the Conversation on several occasions to educate adults on child sexual abuse prevention and know them to be a valuable resource to both our school system and our local community."

Child Advocacy Center, Frederick County

of teachers found Turn the Talk's materials, activities, and resources to be helpful while 100% found the speaker to be knowledgeable about child sexual abuse and effective in delivery.

Turn the Talk broadened its reach during school year 2023-2024 by solidifying Memorandums of Understanding with Baltimore City Public Schools and Baltimore-based private schools as well as expanding its previous curriculum to include Internet and Tech Safety, Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, Child Sexual Abuse and the Law, and Bystander Prevention and Intervention. The program served 6,949 students across 258 classroom presentations in





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# PAGE FOUR

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thirteen Carroll County Public Schools' middle and high schools with twenty-two unique teachers. When asked whether students learned something new as a result of Turn the Talk, ninety-six percent responded yes with sextortion, Internet and tech safety, coercion, reporting, age of consent, Maryland sex offender registry, signs of abuse, removing child sexual abuse material, and being a supportive friend being the top ten responses for what students learned specifically. Two impactful student testimonies read, "Even boys get sexually abused," and "Consent can be given and taken back."

Surpassing our reach to students enrolled in health education by 62% was a great success, but our team vowed not to stop until we have



engaged all communities in the prevention of and healing from child sexual abuse.

In our current school year, Turn the Talk has expanded our school-based partnerships to include Frederick County Public Schools with a total of 439 classroom presentations scheduled across three districts and two independent schools. We have added professional development trainings on Youth Mental Health First Aid, Responding to Child Sexual Abuse in the Classroom, Trends in Child Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention, Preventing Abuse and Protecting Athletes, and Inclusive Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: Meeting the Needs of Those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Finally, we continue to not only support parents with the tools needed to help keep their children safe, but to also empower them to continue using their best parenting tool - their relationship with their children.

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# PAGE FIVE

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**UNTIL ALL CHILDREN ARE SAFE.**

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As we continue to expand our impact, our ask to you is that you consider partnering with us in our mission by offering Turn the Talk in your school district or community-based organization. Our team is prepared to provide you with a modeled presentation so that you are fully informed of all content, materials, and activities utilized during a classroom session. We would then provide classroom presentations to students over the course of a one-day or two-day presentation, which is dependent upon the unique needs of each school or organization and presenter availability. Finally, to ensure alignment with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention best practices, students would continue to engage empathetically with Turn the Talk each school year they are enrolled in health education to further deepen their understanding of the safe, stable, and nurturing relationships every child has a fundamental right to. Thank you for your united community response to ending child sexual abuse.

*Chelsea Dorsey McGonigle,*  
Education and Prevention Specialist

Scan the QR codes below to schedule a consultation, presentation, or training, download an electronic version of Turn the Talk's Information Sheet, and access our latest resource, The Road to Online Safety.



**Connect with Us**



**Information Sheet**



**The Road to Online Safety**

"I have been prosecuting online sexual exploitation of children for 10 years. It is imperative that we combat the rise of these crimes not just with proactive investigations, but through education and prevention."

Joyce King, Frederick County  
State's Attorney's Office